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Under the Great Bear

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Through the Victory Book Campaign
(A. L. A. — A. R. C. — U. S. O.)
To the Armed Forces and Merchant Marine

FROM IT WAS EVOKED A MONSTROUS SHAPE.—*Page* 194.

"Above this far northern sea Ursa Major sailed so directly overhead that he seemed like to fall on us."

—From an early voyage to the coast of Labrador.

Under the Great Bear

BY

KIRK MUNROE

AUTHOR OF
"The Flamingo Feather," "Dorymates,"
"The White Conquerors," Etc.

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1901

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UNDER THE GREAT BEAR.

CHAPTER I.

GRADUATION: BUT WHAT NEXT?

"HEIGH-HO! I wonder what comes next?" sighed Cabot Grant as he tumbled wearily into bed.

The day just ended marked the close of a most important era in his life; for on it he had been graduated from the Technical Institute, in which he had studied his chosen profession, and the coveted sheepskin that entitled him to sign M.E. in capital letters after his name had been in his possession but a few hours.

Although Cabot came of an old New England family, and had been given every educational advantage, he had not graduated with honours, having, in fact, barely scraped through his final examination. He had devoted altogether too much time to athletics, and to the congenial task of acquiring popularity, to have

much left for study. Therefore, while it had been pleasant to be one of the best-liked fellows in the Institute, captain of its football team, and a leading figure in the festivities of the day just ended, now that it was all over our lad was regretting that he had not made a still better use of his opportunities.

A number of his classmates had already been offered fine positions in the business world now looming so ominously close before him. Little pale-faced Dick Chandler, for instance, was to start at once for South Africa, in the interests of a wealthy corporation. Ned Burnett was to be assistant engineer of a famous copper mine; a world-renowned electrical company had secured the services of Smith Redfield, and so on through a dozen names, no one of which was as well known as his, but all outranking it on the graduate list of that day.

Cabot had often heard that the career of Institute students was closely watched by individuals, firms, and corporations in need of young men for responsible positions, and had more than once resolved to graduate with a rank that should attract the attention of such persons. But there had been so much to do besides study that had seemed more important at the time, that he had allowed day after day to slip by without making the required effort,

and now it appeared that no one wanted him.

Yes, there was one person who had made him a proposition that very day. Thorpe Walling, the wealthiest fellow in the class, and one of its few members who had failed to gain a diploma, had said:

"Look here, Grant, what do you say to taking a year's trip around the world with me, while I coach for a degree next June? There is no such educator as travel, you know, and we'll make a point of going to all sorts of places where we can pick up ideas. At the same time it'll be no end of a lark."

"I don't know," Cabot had replied doubtfully, though his face had lighted at the mere idea of taking such a trip. "I'd rather do that than almost anything else I know of, but——"

"If you are thinking of the expense," broke in the other.

"It isn't that," interrupted Cabot, "but it seems somehow as though I ought to be doing something more in the line of business. Anyway, I can't give you an answer until I have seen my guardian, who has sent me word to meet him in New York day after to-morrow. I'll let you know what he says, and if everything is all right, perhaps I'll go with you."

With this the matter had rested, and during

the manifold excitements of the day our lad had not given it another thought, until he tumbled into bed, wondering what would happen next. Then for a long time he lay awake, considering Thorpe's proposition, and wishing that it had been made by any other fellow in the class.

Until about the time of entering the Technical Institute, from which he was just graduated, Cabot Grant, who was an only child, had been blessed with as happy a home as ever a boy enjoyed. Then in a breath it was taken from him by a railway accident, that had caused the instant death of his mother, and which the father had only survived long enough to provide for his son's immediate future by making a will. By its terms his slender fortune was placed in the hands of a trust and investment company, who were constituted the boy's guardians, and enjoined to give their ward a liberal education along such lines as he himself might choose.

The corporation thus empowered had been faithful to its trust, and had carried out to the letter the instructions of their deceased client during the past five years. Now less than a twelvemonth of their guardianship remained and it was to plan for his disposal of this time that Cabot had been summoned to New York.

He had never met the president of the corporation, and it was with no little curiosity concerning him that he awaited, in a sumptuously appointed anteroom, his turn for an audience with the busy man. At length he was shown into a plainly furnished private office occupied by but two persons, one somewhat past middle age, with a shrewd, smooth-shaven face, and the other much younger, who was evidently a private secretary.

Of course Cabot instantly knew the former to be President Hepburn; and also, to his surprise, recognised him as one who had occupied a prominent position on the platform of the Institute hall when he had graduated two days earlier.

"Yes," said Mr. Hepburn, in a crisp, business tone, as he noted the lad's flash of recognition, "I happened to be passing through and dropped in to see our ward graduate. I was, of course, disappointed that you did not take higher rank. At the same time I concluded not to make myself known to you, for fear of interfering with some of your plans for the day. It also seemed to me better that we should talk business here. Now, with your Institute career ended, how do you propose to spend the remainder of your minority? I ask because, as you doubtless know, our instruc-

tions are to consult your wishes in all matters, and conform to them as far as possible."

"I appreciate your kindness in that respect," replied Cabot, who was somewhat chilled by this business-like reception, "and have decided, if the funds remaining in your hands are sufficient for the purpose, to spend the coming year in foreign travel; in fact, to take a trip around the world."

"With any definite object in view," inquired Mr. Hepburn, "or merely for pleasure?"

"With the definite object of studying my chosen profession wherever I may find it practised."

"Um! Just so. Do you propose to take this trip alone or in company?"

"I propose to go with Thorpe Walling, one of my classmates."

"Son of the late General Walling, and a man who failed to graduate, is he not?"

"Yes, sir. Do you know him?"

"I knew his father, and wish you had chosen some other companion."

"I did not choose him. He chose me, and invited me to go with him."

"At your own expense, I suppose?"

"Certainly! I could not have considered his proposition otherwise."

"Of course not," agreed Mr. Hepburn, "seeing that you have funds quite sufficient for such a venture, if used with economy. And you have decided that you would rather spend the ensuing year in foreign travel with Thorpe Walling than do anything else?"

"I think I have, sir."

"Very well, my boy. While I cannot say that I consider your decision the best that could be made, I have no valid objections to offer, and am bound to grant as far as possible your reasonable desires. So you have my consent to this scheme, if not my whole approval. When do you plan to start?"

"Thorpe wishes to go at once."

"Then, if you will call here to-morrow morning at about this hour, I will have arranged for your letter of credit, and anything else that may suggest itself for making your trip a pleasant one."

"Thank you, sir," said Cabot, who, believing the interview to be ended, turned to leave the room.

"By the way," continued Mr. Hepburn, "there is another thing I wish to mention. Can you recommend one of your recent classmates for an important mission, to be undertaken at once to an out-of-the-way part of the world? He must be a young man of good

morals, able to keep his business affairs to himself, not afraid of hard work, and willing as well as physically able to endure hardships. His intelligence and mental fitness will, of course, be guaranteed by the Institute's diploma. Our company is in immediate need of such a person, and will engage him at a good salary for a year, with certain prospects of advancement, if he gives satisfaction. Think it over and let me know in the morning if you have hit upon one whom you believe would meet those requirements. In the meantime please do not mention the subject to any one."

Charged with this commission, and relieved that the dreaded interview was ended, Cabot hastened uptown to a small secret society club of which he was a non-resident member. There he wrote a note to Thorpe Walling, accepting his invitation, and expressing a readiness to set forth at once on their proposed journey. This done, he joined a group of fellows who were discussing summer plans in the reading-room.

"What are you going in for, Grant?" asked one. "Is your summer to be devoted to work or play?"

"Both," laughed Cabot. "Thorpe Walling and I are to take an educational trip around the world, during which we hope to have great fun and accomplish much work."

"Ho, ho!" jeered he who had put the question. "That's a good one. The idea of coupling 'Torpid' Walling's name with anything that savors of work. You'll have a good time fast enough. But I'll wager anything you like, that in his company you will circumnavigate the globe without having done any work harder than spending money. No, no, my dear boy, 'Torpid' is not the chap to encourage either mental or physical effort in his associates. Better hunt some other companion, or even go by your lonely, if you really want to accomplish anything."

These words recurred to our lad many times during the day, and when he finally fell asleep that night, after fruitlessly wondering who of his many friends he should recommend to President Hepburn, they were still ringing in his ears.

CHAPTER II.

AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT.

THORPE WALLING had never been one of Cabot Grant's particular friends, nor did the latter now regard with unmixed pleasure the idea of a year's intimate association with him. He had accepted the latter's invitation because nothing else seemed likely to offer, and he could not bear to have the other fellows, especially those whose class standing had secured them positions, imagine that he was not also in demand. Besides, the thought of a trip around the world was certainly very enticing; any opposition to the plan would have rendered him the more desirous of carrying it out. But in his interview with his guardian he had gained his point so easily that the concession immediately lost half its value. Even as he wrote his note to Thorpe he wondered if he really wanted to go with him, and after that conversation in the club reading-room he was almost certain that he did not. If Mr. Hepburn had only offered him employment, how gladly he

would have accepted it and declined Thorpe's invitation; but his guardian had merely asked him to recommend some one else.

"Which shows," thought Cabot bitterly, "what he thinks of me, and of my fitness for any position of importance. He is right, too, for if ever a fellow threw away opportunities, I have done so during the past four years. And now I am deliberately going to spend another, squandering my last dollar, in company with a chap who will have no further use for me when it is gone. It really begins to look as though I were about the biggest fool of my acquaintance."

It was in this frame of mind that our young engineer made a second visit to his guardian's office on the following morning. There he was received by Mr. Hepburn with the same business-like abruptness that had marked their interview of the day before.

"Good-morning, Cabot," he said. "I see you are promptly on hand, and, I suppose, anxious to be off. Well, I don't blame you, for a pleasure trip around the world isn't offered to every young fellow, and I wish I were in a position to take such a one myself. I have had prepared a letter of credit for the balance of your property remaining in our hands, and while it probably is not as large a sum as your

friend Walling will carry, it is enough to see you through very comfortably, if you exercise a reasonable economy. I have also written letters of introduction to our agents in several foreign cities that may prove useful. Let me hear from you occasionally, and I trust you will have fully as good a time as you anticipate."

"Thank you, sir," said Cabot. "You are very kind."

"Not at all. I am only striving to carry out your father's instructions, and do what he paid to have done. Now, how about the young man you were to recommend? Have you thought of one?"

"No, sir, I haven't. You see, all the fellows who graduated with honours found places waiting for them, and as I knew you would only want one of the best, I can't think of one whom I can recommend for your purpose. I am very sorry, but——"

"I fear I did not make our requirements quite clear," interrupted Mr. Hepburn, "since I did not mean to convey the impression that we would employ none but an honour man. It often happens that he who ranks highest as a student fails of success in the business world; and under certain conditions I would employ the man who graduated lowest in his class rather than him who stood at its head."

Cabot's face expressed his amazement at this statement, and noting it, Mr. Hepburn smiled as he continued:

"The mere fact that a young man has graduated from your Institute, even though it be with low rank, insures his possession of technical knowledge sufficient for our purpose. If, at the same time, he is a gentleman endowed with the faculty of making friends, as well as an athlete willing to meet and able to overcome physical difficulties, I would employ him in preference to a more studious person who lacked any of these qualifications. If you, for instance, had not already decided upon a plan for spending the ensuing year, I should not hesitate to offer you the position we desire to fill."

Cabot trembled with excitement. "I—Mr. Hepburn!" he exclaimed. "Would you really have offered it to me?"

"Certainly I would. I desired you to meet me here for that very purpose; but when I found you had made other arrangements that might prove equally advantageous, I believed I was meeting your father's wishes by helping you carry them out."

"Is the place still open, and can I have it?" asked Cabot eagerly.

"Not if you are going around the world; for, although the duties of the position will include a

certain amount of travel, it will not be in that direction."

"But I don't want to go around the world, and would rather take the position you have to offer than do anything else I know of," declared Cabot.

"Without knowing its requirements, what hardships it may present, nor in what direction it may lead you?" inquired the other.

"Yes, sir. So long as you offer it I would accept it without question, even though it should be a commission to discover the North Pole."

"My dear boy," said Mr. Hepburn, in an entirely different tone from that he had hitherto used, "I trust I may never forfeit nor abuse the confidence implied by these words. Although you did not know it, I have carefully watched every step of your career during the past five years, and while you have done some things, as well as developed some traits, that are to be regretted, I am satisfied that you are at least worthy of a trial in the position we desire to fill. So, if you are willing to relinquish your proposed trip around the world, and enter the employ of this company instead, you may consider yourself engaged for the term of one year from this date. During that time all your legitimate expenses will be met, but no salary will be paid you until the expiration of the year, when its

amount will be determined by the value of the services you have rendered. Is that satisfactory?"

"It is, sir," replied Cabot, "and with your permission I will at once telegraph Thorpe Walling that I cannot go with him."

"Write your despatch here and I will have it sent out. At the same time, do not mention that you have entered the employ of this company, as there are reasons why, for the present at least, that should remain a secret."

When Cabot's telegram was ready, Mr. Hepburn, who had been glancing through a number of letters that awaited his signature, handed it to his secretary, to whom he also gave some instructions that Cabot did not catch. As the former left the room, the president turned to our young engineer and said:

"As perhaps you are aware, Cabot, there is at present an unprecedented demand all over the world for both iron and copper, and our company is largely interested in the production of these metals. As existing sources of supply are inadequate it is of importance that new ones should be discovered, and if they can be found on the Atlantic seaboard, so much the better. In looking about for new fields that may be profitably worked, our attention has been directed to the island of Newfoundland and the coast of Lab-

rador. While the former has been partially explored, we desire more definite information as to its available ore beds. There is a small island in Conception Bay, not far from St. Johns, known as Bell Island, said to be a mass of iron ore, that is already being worked by a local company. From it I should like to have a report, as soon as you reach St. Johns, concerning the nature of the ore, the extent of the deposit, the cost of mining it, the present output, the facilities for shipment, and so forth. At the same time I want you to obtain this information without divulging the nature of your business, or allowing your name to become in any way connected with this company.

"Having finished with Bell Island, you will visit such other portions of Newfoundland as are readily accessible from the coast, and seem to promise good results, always keeping to yourself the true nature of your business. Finally, you will proceed to Labrador, where you will make such explorations as are possible. You will report any discoveries in person, when you return to New York, as I do not care to have them entrusted to the mails. Above all, do not fail to bring back specimens of whatever you may find in the way of minerals. Are these instructions sufficiently clear?"

"They seem so, sir."

"Very well, then. I wish you to start this very day, as I find that a steamer, on which your passage is already engaged, sails from a Brooklyn pier for St. Johns this afternoon. This letter of credit, which only awaits your signature before a notary, will, if deposited with the bank of Nova Scotia in St. Johns, more than defray your year's expenses, and whatever you can save from it will be added to your salary. Therefore, it will pay you to practise economy, though you must not hesitate to incur legitimate expenses or to spend money when by so doing you can further the objects of your journey. You have enough money for your immediate needs, have you not?"

"Yes, sir. I have about fifty dollars."

"That will be ample, since your ticket to St. Johns is already paid for. Here it is."

Thus saying, Mr. Hepburn handed over an envelope containing the steamship ticket that his secretary had been sent out to obtain.

"I would take as little baggage as possible," he continued, "for you can purchase everything necessary in St. Johns, and will discover what you need after you get there. Now, good-bye, my boy. God bless you and bring you back in safety. Remember that the coming year will probably prove the most important of your life, and that your future now depends entirely upon

yourself. Mr. Black here will go with you to the banker's, where you can sign your letter of credit."

So our young engineer was launched on the sea of business life. Two hours later he had packed a dress-suit case and sent his trunk down to the company's building for storage. On his way to the steamer he stopped at his club for a bite of lunch, and as he was leaving the building he encountered the friend with whom he had discussed his plans the day before.

"Hello!" exclaimed that individual, "where are you going in such a hurry. Not starting off on your year of travel, are you?"

"Yes," laughed Cabot. "I am to sail within an hour. Good-bye!"

With this he ran down the steps and jumped into a waiting cab.

CHAPTER III.

THE STRANGE FATE OF A STEAMER.

So exciting had been the day, and so fully had its every minute been occupied, that not until Cabot stood on the deck of the steamer "Lavinia," curiously watching the bustling preparations for her departure, did he have time to realise the wonderful change in his prospects that had taken place within a few hours. That morning his life had seemed wholly aimless, and he had been filled with envy of those among his recent classmates whose services were in demand. Now he would not change places with any one of them; for was not he, too, entrusted with an important mission that held promise of a brilliant future in case he should carry it to a successful conclusion?

"And I will," he mentally resolved. "No matter what happens, if I live I will succeed."

In spite of this brave resolve our lad could not help feeling rather forlorn as he watched those about him, all of whom seemed to have friends to see them off; while he alone stood friendless and unnoticed.

Especially was his attention attracted to a nearby group of girls gathered about one who was evidently a bride. They were full of gay chatter, and he overheard one of them say:

"If you come within sight of an iceberg, Nelly, make him go close to it so you can get a good photograph. I should like awfully to have one."

"So should I," cried another. "But, oh! wouldn't it be lovely if we could only have a picture of this group, standing just as we are aboard the ship. It would make a splendid beginning for your camera."

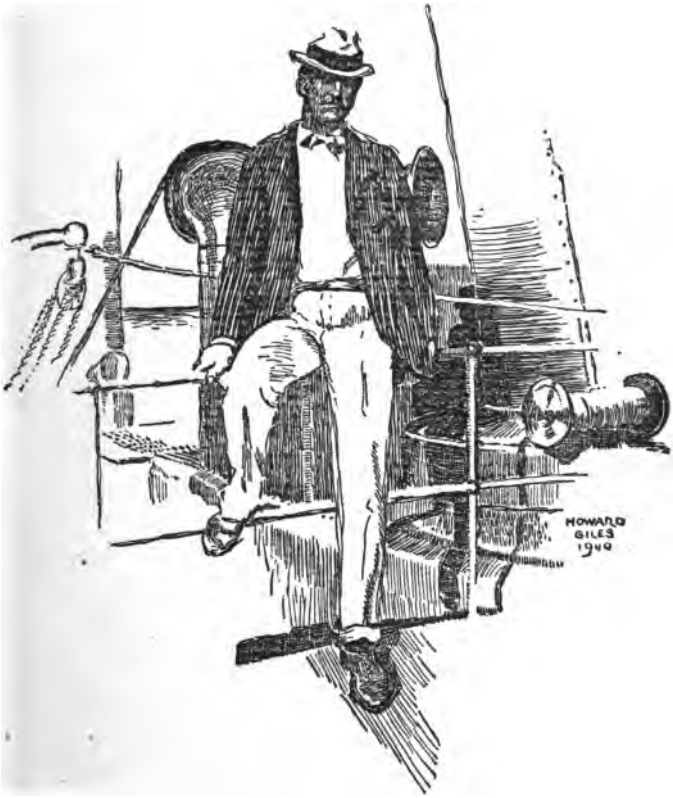
The bride, who, as Cabot saw, carried a small brand-new camera similar to one he had recently procured for his own use, promptly expressed her willingness to employ it as suggested, but was greeted by a storm of protests from her companions.

"No, indeed! You must be in it of course!" they cried.

Then it further transpired that all wished to be "in it," and no one wanted to act the part of photographer. At this juncture Cabot stepped forward, and lifting his cap, said:

"I am somewhat of a photographer, and with your permission it would afford me great pleasure to take a picture of so charming a group."

For a moment the girls looked at the pre-



ON THE DECK OF THE STEAMER "LAVINIA."

sumptuous young stranger in silence. Then the bride, flushing prettily, stepped forward and handed him her camera, saying as she did so:

"Thank you, sir, ever so much for your kind offer, which we are glad to accept."

So Cabot arranged the group amid much laughter, and by the time two plates had been exposed, had made rapid progress towards getting acquainted with its several members.

The episode was barely ended before all who were to remain behind were ordered ashore, and, a few minutes later, as the ship began to move slowly from her dock, our traveller found himself waving his handkerchief and shouting goodbyes as vigorously as though all on the wharf were assembled for the express purpose of bidding him farewell.

By the time the "Lavinia" was in the stream and headed up the East River, with her long voyage fairly begun, Cabot had learned that his new acquaintance was a bride of but a few hours, having been married that morning to the captain of that very steamer. She had hardly made this confession when her husband, temporarily relieved of his responsibilities by a pilot, came in search of her and was duly presented to our hero. His name was Phinney, and he so took to Cabot that from that moment the latter no longer found himself lonely or at a loss for occupation.

As he had never before been at sea, the voyage proved full of interest, and his intelligent questions received equally intelligent answers from Captain Phinney, who was a well-informed young man but a few years older than Cabot, and an enthusiast in his calling.

Up Long Island Sound went the "Lavinia," and it was late that night before our lad turned in, so interested was he in watching the many lights that were pointed out by his new acquaintance. The next morning found the ship threading her way amid the shoals of Nantucket Sound, after which came the open sea; and for the first time in his life Cabot lost sight of land. Halifax was reached on the following day, and here the steamer remained twenty-four hours discharging freight.

The capital of Nova Scotia marks the half-way point between New York and St. Johns, Newfoundland, which name Cabot was already learning to pronounce as do its inhabitants—New-fund-*land*—and after leaving it the ship was again headed for the open across the wide mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Thus far the weather had been fine, the sea smooth, and nothing had occurred to break the pleasant monotony of the voyage. Its chief interests lay in sighting distant sails, the tell-tale smoke pennons of far-away steamers, the plume-like spoutings of slug-

gishly moving whales, the darting of porpoises about the ship's fore-foot, the wide circling overhead of gulls, or the dainty skimming just above the wave crests of Mother Carey's fluffy chickens.

"Who was Mother Carey," asked Cabot, "and why are they her chickens?"

"I have been told that she was the *Mater Cara* of devout Portuguese sailors," replied Captain Phinney, "and that these tiny sea-fowl are supposed to be under her especial protection, since the fiercest of gales have no power to harm them."

"How queerly names become changed and twisted out of their original shape," remarked Cabot meditatively. "The idea of *Mater Cara* becoming Mother Carey!"

"That is an easy change compared with some others I have run across," laughed the captain. "For instance, I once put up at an English seaport tavern called the 'Goat and Compasses,' and found out that its original name, given in Cromwell's time, had been 'God Encompasseth Us.' Almost as curious is the present name of that portion of the Newfoundland coast nearest us at this minute. It is called 'Ferryland,' which is a corruption of 'Verulam,' the name applied by its original owner, Lord Baltimore, in memory of his home estate in England. In fact, this region abounds in queerly twisted names, most of

which were originally French. Bai d'espoir, for instance, has become Bay Despair. Blanc Sablon and Isle du Bois up on the Labrador coast have been Anglicised as Nancy Belong and Boys' Island. Cape Race, which is almost within sight, was the Capo Razzo of its Portuguese discoverer. Cape Spear was Cappo Sperenza, and Pointe l'Amour is now Lammer's Point."

While taking part in conversations of this kind both Cabot and Mrs. Phinney, who were the only passengers now left on the ship, kept a sharp lookout for icebergs, which, as they had learned, were apt to be met in those waters at that season. Finally, during the afternoon of the last day they expected to spend on shipboard, a distant white speck dead ahead, which was at first taken for a sail, proved to be an iceberg, and from that moment it was watched with the liveliest curiosity. Before their rapid approach it developed lofty pinnacles, and proved of the most dazzling whiteness, save at the water line, where it was banded with vivid blue. It was exquisitely chiselled and carved into dainty forms by the gleaming rivulets that ran down its steep sides and fell into the sea as miniature cascades. So wonderfully beautiful were the icy details as they were successively unfolded, that the bride begged her husband to take his ship just as close as possible, in order that she might obtain a perfect photograph.

Anxious to gratify her every wish, Captain Phinney readily consented, and the ship's course was slightly altered, so as to pass within one hundred feet of the glistening monster, which was now sharply outlined against a dark bank of fog rolling heavily in from the eastward.

Both cameras had been kept busy from the time the berg came within range of their finders, but just as the best point of view was reached, and when they were so near that the chill of the ice was distinctly felt, Cabot discovered that he had exhausted his roll of films. Uttering an exclamation of disgust, he ran aft and down to his stateroom, that opened from the lower saloon, to secure another cartridge. As he entered the room, he closed its door to get at his dress-suit case that lay behind it.

Recklessly tossing the contents of the case right and left, he had just laid hands on the desired object and was rising to his feet when, without warning, he was flung violently to the floor by a shock like that of an earthquake. It was accompanied by a dull roar and an awful sound of crashing and rending. At the same time the ship seemed to be lifted bodily. Then she fell back, apparently striking on her side, and for several minutes rolled with sickening lurches, as though in the trough of a heavy sea.

In the meantime Cabot was struggling furi-

ously to open his stateroom door; but it had so jammed in its casing that his utmost efforts failed to move it. The steel deck beams overhead were twisted like willow wands, the iron side of the ship was crumpled as though it were a sheet of paper, and with every downward lurch a torrent of icy water poured in about the air port, which, though still closed, had been wrenched out of position. With a horrid dread the prisoner realised that unless quickly released he must drown where he was, and, unable to open the door, he began to kick at it with the hope of smashing one of its panels.

With his first effort in this direction there came another muffled roar like that of an explosion, and he felt the ship quiver as though it were being rent in twain. At the same moment his door flew open of its own accord, and he was nearly suffocated by an inrush of steam. Springing forward, and blindly groping his way through this, the bewildered lad finally reached the stairs he had so recently descended. In another minute he had gained the deck, where he stood gasping for breath and vainly trying to discover what terrible thing had happened.

Not a human being was to be seen, and the forward part of the ship was concealed beneath a dense cloud of steam and smoke that hung over it like a pall. Cabot fancied he could distin-

HE BEGAN TO KICK AT IT WITH THE HOPE OF SMASHING ONE OF ITS PANELS.

guish shouting in that direction, and attempted to gain the point from which it seemed to come; but found the way barred by a yawning opening in the deck, from which poured smoke and flame as though it were the crater of a volcano. Then he ran back, and at length found himself on top of the after house, cutting with his pocket knife at the lashings of a life raft; for he realised that the ship was sinking so rapidly that she might plunge to the bottom at any moment.

Five minutes later he lay prone on the buoyant raft, clutching the sides of its wooden platform, while it spun like a storm-driven leaf in the vortex marking the spot where the ill-fated "Lavinia" had sunk.

CHAPTER IV.

ALONE ON THE LIFE RAFT.

ANYTHING less buoyant than a modern life raft, consisting of two steel cylinders stoutly braced and connected by a wooden platform, would have been drawn under by the deadly clutch of that swirling vortex. No open boat could have lived in it for a minute; and even the raft, spinning round and round with dizzy velocity, was sucked downward until it was actually below the level of the surrounding water. But, sturdily resisting the down-dragging force, its wonderful buoyancy finally triumphed, and as its rotary motion became less rapid, Cabot sat up and gazed about him with the air of one who has been stunned.

He was dazed by the awfulness of the catastrophe that had so suddenly overwhelmed the "Lavinia," and could form no idea of its nature. Had there been a collision? If so, it must have been with the iceberg, for nothing else had been in sight when he went below. Yet it was incredible that such a thing could have happened in

broad daylight. The afternoon had been clear and bright; of that he was certain, though his surroundings were now shrouded by an impenetrable veil of fog. Through this he could see nothing, and from it came no sound save the moan of winds sweeping across a limitless void of waters.

What had become of his recent companions? Had they gone down with the ship, and was he sole survivor of the tragedy? At this thought the lad sprang to his feet, and shouted, calling his friends by name, and begging them not to leave him; but the only answer came in shape of mocking echoes hurled sharply back from close at hand. Looking in that direction, he dimly discerned a vast outline of darker substance than the enveloping mist. From it came also a sound of falling waters, and against it the sea was beating angrily. At the same time he was conscious of a deadly chill in the air, and came to a sudden comprehension that the iceberg, to which he attributed all his present distress, was still close at hand.

Its mere presence brought a new terror; for he knew that unless the attraction of its great bulk could be overcome, his little raft must speedily be drawn to it and dashed helplessly against its icy cliffs. This thought filled him with a momentary despair, for there seemed no possibility of

avoiding the impending fate. Then his eyes fell on a pair of oars lashed, together with their metal rowlocks, to the sides of his raft. In another minute he had shipped these and was pulling with all his might away from that ill-omened neighbourhood.

The progress of his clumsy craft was painfully slow; but it did move, and at the end the dreaded ice monster was beyond both sight and hearing. The exercise of rowing had warmed Cabot as well as temporarily diverted his mind from a contemplation of the terrible scenes through which he had so recently passed. Now, however, as he rested on his oars, a full sense of his wretched plight came back to him, and he grew sick at heart as he realised how forlorn was his situation. He wondered if he could survive the night that was rapidly closing in on him, and, if he did, whether the morrow would find him any better off. He had no idea of the direction in which wind and current were drifting him, whether further out to sea or towards the land. He was again shivering with cold, he was hungry and thirsty, and so filled with terror at the black waters leaping towards him from all sides that he finally flung himself face downward on the wet platform to escape from seeing them.

When he next lifted his head he found himself in utter darkness, through which he fancied

he could still hear the sound of waters dashing against frigid cliffs, and with an access of terror he once more sprang to his oars. Now he rowed with the wind, keeping it as directly astern as possible; nor did he pause in his efforts until compelled by exhaustion. Then he again lay down, and this time dropped into a fitful doze.

Waking a little later with chattering teeth, he resumed his oars for the sake of warming exercise, and again rowed as long as he was able. So, with alternating periods of weary work and unrefreshing rest, the slow dragging hours of that interminable night were spent. Finally, after he had given up all hope of ever again seeing a gleam of sunshine, a faint gray began to permeate the fog that still held him in its wet embrace, and Cabot knew that he had lived to see the beginnings of another day.

To make sure that the almost imperceptible light really marked the dawn, he shut his eyes and resolutely kept them closed until he had counted five hundred. Then he opened them, and almost screamed with the joy of being able to trace the outlines of his raft. Again and again he did this until at length the black night shadows had been fairly vanquished and only those of the fog remained.

With the assurance that day had fairly come, and that the dreaded iceberg was at least not

close at hand, Cabot again sought forgetfulness of his misery in sleep. When he awoke some hours later, aching in every bone, and painfully hungry, he was also filled with a delicious sense of warmth; for the sun, already near its meridian, was shining as brightly as though no such things as fog or darkness had ever existed.

On standing up and looking about him, the young castaway was relieved to note that the iceberg from which he had suffered so much was no longer in sight. At the same time he was grievously disappointed that he could discover no sail nor other token that any human being save himself was abroad on all that lonely sea.

He experienced a momentary exhilaration when, on turning to the west, he discovered a dark far-reaching line that he believed to be land; but his spirits fell as he measured the distance separating him from it, and realised how slight a chance he had of ever gaining the coast. To be sure, the light breeze then blowing was in that direction, but it might change at any moment; and even with it to aid his rowing he doubted if his clumsy craft could make more than a mile an hour. Thus darkness would again overtake him ere he had covered more than half the required distance, though he should row steadily during the remainder of the day. He knew that his growing weakness would de-

mand intervals of rest with ever-increasing frequency until utter exhaustion should put an end to his efforts; and then what would become of him? Still there was nothing else to be done; and, with a dogged determination to die fighting, if die he must, the poor lad sat down and resumed his hopeless task.

A life raft is not intended to be used as a row-boat, and is unprovided with either seats or foot braces. Being thus compelled to sit on the platform, Cabot could get so little purchase that half his effort was wasted, and the progress made was barely noticeable. During his frequent pauses for rest he stood up to gaze longingly at the goal that still appeared as far away as ever, and grew more unattainable as the day wore on. At length the sun was well down the western sky, across which it appeared to race as never before. As Cabot watched it, and vaguely wished for the power once given to Joshua, the bleakness of despair suddenly enfolded him, and his eyes became blurred with tears. He covered them with his hands to shut out the mocking sunlight, and sat down because he was too weak to stand any longer. He had fought his fight very nearly to a finish, and his strength was almost gone. He had perhaps brought his craft five miles nearer to the land than it was when he set out; but after all what had been the gain? Apparently there

was none, and he would not further torture his aching body with useless effort.

In the meantime a small schooner, bringing with her a fair wind, was running rapidly down the coast, not many miles from where our poor lad so despairingly awaited the coming of night. That he had not seen her while standing up, was owing to the fact that her sails, instead of being white, were tanned a dull red, that blended perfectly with the colour of the distant shore line. A bright-faced, resolute chap, somewhat younger than Cabot, but of equally sturdy build, held the tiller, and regarded with evident approval the behaviour of his speeding craft.

"We'll make it, Dave," he cried, cheerily. "The old 'Sea Bee's' got the wings of 'em this time."

"Mebbe so," growled the individual addressed, an elderly man who stood in the companionway, with his head just above the hatch, peering forward under the swelling sails. "Mebbe so," he repeated, "and mebbe not. Steam's hard to beat on land or water, an' we be a far cry from Pretty Harbour yet. So fur that ef they're started they'll overhaul us before day, and beat us in by a good twelve hour. It's what I'm looking fur."

"Oh, pshaw!" replied the young skipper. "What a gammy old croaker you are. They

won't start to-day, anyhow. But here, take her a minute, while I go aloft for one more look before sundown to make sure."

As the man complied with this request, and waddling aft took the tiller, his more active companion sprang into the main rigging and ran rapidly to the masthead, from which point of vantage he gazed back for a full minute over the course they had come.

"Not a sign," he shouted down at length. "But hello," he added to himself, "what's that?" With a glance seaward his keen eye had detected a distant floating object that was momentarily uplifted on the back of a long swell, and flashed white in the rays of the setting sun.

"Luff her, David! Hard down with your hellum, and trim in all," he shouted to the steersman. "There, steady, so."

"Wot's hup?" inquired the man a few minutes later, as the other rejoined him on deck.

"Don't know for sure; but there's something floating off there that looks like a bit of wreckage."

"An' you, with all your hurry, going to stop fur a closer look, and lose time that'll mebbe prove the most wallyable of your life," growled the man disgustedly. "Wal, I'll be jiggered!"

"So would I, if I didn't," replied the lad. "It was one of dad's rules never to pass any kind of

a wreck without at least one good look at it, and so it's one of mine as well. There's what I'm after, now. See, just off the starboard bow. It's a raft, and David, there's a man on it, sure as you live. Look, he's standing up and waving at us. Now, he's down again! Poor fellow! In with the jib, David! Spry now, and stand by with a line. I'm going to round up, right alongside."

CHAPTER V.

WHITE BALDWIN AND HIS "SEA BEE."

THE hour that preceded the coming of that heaven-sent schooner was the blackest of Cabot Grant's life, and as he sat with bowed head on the wet platform of his tossing raft he was utterly hopeless. He believed that he should never again hear a human voice nor tread the blessed land—yes, everything was ended for him, or very nearly so, and whatever record he had made in life must now stand without addition or correction. His thoughts went back as far as he could remember anything, and every act of his life was clearly recalled. How mean some of them now appeared; how thoughtless, indifferent, or selfish he had been in others. Latterly how he had been filled with a sense of his own importance, how he had worked and schemed for a little popularity, and now who would regret him, or give his memory more than a passing thought?

Thorpe Walling would say: "Served him right for throwing me over, as he did," and others would agree with him. Even Mr. Hepburn,

who had doubtless given him a chance merely because he was his guardian, would easily find a better man to put in his place. Some cousins whom he had never seen nor cared to know would rejoice on coming into possession of his little property; and so, on the whole, his disappearance would cause more of satisfaction than regret. Most bitter of all was the thought that he would never have the opportunity of changing, or at least of trying to change, this state of affairs, since he had doubtless looked at the sun for the last time, and the blackness of an endless night was about to enfold him.

Had he really seen his last ray of sunlight and hope? No; it could not be. There must be a gleam left. The sun could not have set yet. He lifted his head. There was no sun to be seen. With a cry of terror he sprang to his feet, and, from the slight elevation thus gained, once more beheld the mighty orb of day, and life, and promise, crowning with a splendour infinitely beyond anything of this earth, the distant shore-line that he had striven so stoutly to gain.

Dazzled by its radiance, Cabot saw nothing else during the minute that it lingered above the horizon. Then, as it disappeared, he uttered another cry, but this time it was one of incredulous and joyful amazement, for close at hand, coming directly towards him from out the western glory,

was a ship bearing a new lease of life and freighted with new opportunities.

The poor lad tried to wave his cap at the newcomers; but after a feeble attempt sank to his knees, overcome by weakness and gratitude. It was in that position they found him as the little schooner was rounded sharply into the wind, and, with fluttering sails, lay close alongside the drifting raft.

David flung a line that Cabot found strength to catch and hold to, while the young skipper of the "Sea Bee" sprang over her low rail and alighted beside the castaway just as the latter staggered to his feet with outstretched hand. The stranger grasped it tightly in both of his, and for a moment the two gazed into each other's eyes without a word. Cabot tried to speak, but something choked him so that he could not; and, noting this, the other said gently:

"It is all over now, and you are as safe as though you stood on dry land; so don't try to say anything till we've made you comfortable, for I know you must have had an almighty hard time."

"Yes," whispered Cabot. "I've been hungry, and thirsty, and wet, and cold, and scared; but now I'm only grateful—more grateful than I can ever tell."

A little later the life raft, its mission accomplished, was left to toss and drift at will, while

the "Sea Bee," with everything set and drawing finely, was rapidly regaining her course, guided by the far-reaching flash of Cape Race light. In her dingy little cabin, which seemed to our rescued lad the most delightfully snug, warm, and altogether comfortable place he had ever entered, Cabot lay in the skipper's own bunk, regarding with intense interest the movements of that busy youth.

The latter had lighted a swinging lamp, started a fire in a small and very rusty galley stove, set a tea kettle on to boil, and a pan of cold chowder to re-warm. Having thus got supper well under way, he returned to the cabin, where he proceeded to set the table. The worst of Cabot's distress had already been relieved by a cup of cold tea and a ship's biscuit. Now, finding that he was able to talk, his host could no longer restrain his curiosity, but began to ask questions. He had already learned Cabot's name, and told his own, which was Whiteway Baldwin, "called White for short," he had added. Now he said:

"You needn't talk, if you don't feel like it, but I do wish you could tell how you came to be drifting all alone on that raft."

"A steamer that I was on was wrecked yesterday, and so far as I know I am the only survivor," answered Cabot.

"*Goodness!* You don't say so! What steamer

was she, where was she bound, and what part of the coast was she wrecked on?"

"She was the 'Lavinia' from New York for St. Johns, and she wasn't wrecked on any part of the coast, but was lost at sea."

"*Jiminetty!* The 'Lavinia'! It don't seem possible. How did it happen? There hasn't been any gale. Did she blow up, or what?"

"I don't know," replied Cabot, "for I was down-stairs when it took place, and my stateroom door was jammed so that I couldn't get out for a long time. I only know that there was the most awful crash I ever heard, and it seemed as though the ship were being torn to pieces. Then there came an explosion, and when I got on deck the ship was sinking so fast that I had only time to cut loose the raft before she went down."

"What became of the others?" asked White excitedly.

"I am afraid they were drowned, for I heard them shouting just before she sank, but there was such a cloud of steam, smoke, and fog that I couldn't see a thing, and after it was all over I seemed to be the only one left."

"Wasn't there a rock or ship or anything she might have run into?" asked the young skipper, whose tanned face had grown pale as he listened to this tale of sudden disaster.

"There was an iceberg," replied Cabot, "but

when I went down-stairs it wasn't very close, and the sun was shining, so that it was in plain sight."

"That must be what she struck, though," declared the other. Then he thrust his head up the companionway and shouted: "Hear the news, Dave. The 'Lavinia's' lost with all on board, except the chap we've just picked up."

"What happened her?" asked the man laconically.

"He says she ran into an iceberg in clear day, bust up, and sank with all hands, inside of a minute."

"Rot!" replied the practical sailor. "The 'Laviny' had collision bulkheads, and couldn't have sunk in no sich time, ef she could at all. 'Sides Cap'n Phinney ain't no man to run down a berg in clear day, nor yet in the night, nor no other time. He's been on this coast and the Labrador run too long fur any sich foolishness. No, son, ef the 'Laviny's' lost, which mind, I don't say she ain't, she's lost some other way 'sides that, an' you can tell your friend so with my compliments."

Cabot did not overhear these remarks, and wondered at the queer look on the young skipper's face when he reëntered the cabin, as he did at the silence with which the latter resumed his preparations for supper. At the same time he was still too weak, and, in spite of his biscuit, too

ravenously hungry to care for further conversation just then. So it was only after a most satisfactory meal and several cups of very hot tea that he was ready in his turn to ask questions. But he was not given the chance; for, as soon as White Baldwin was through with eating, he went on deck to relieve the tiller, and the other member of the crew, whose name was David Gidge, came below.

He was a man of remarkable appearance, of very broad shoulders and long arms; but with legs so bowed outward as to materially lower his stature, which would have been short at best, and convert his gait into an absurd waddle. His face was disfigured by a scar across one cheek that so drew that corner of his mouth downward as to produce a peculiarly forbidding expression. He also wore a bristling iron-grey beard that grew in form of a fringe or ruff, and added an air of ferocity to his make up.

As this striking-looking individual entered the cabin and rolled into a seat at the table, he cast one glance, accompanied by a grunt, at Cabot, and then proceeded to attend strictly to the business in hand. He ate in such prodigious haste, and gulped his food in such vast mouthfuls, that he had cleaned the table of its last crumb, and was fiercely stuffing black tobacco into a still blacker pipe, before Cabot, who really wished to

talk with him, had decided how to open the conversation. Lighting his pipe and puffing it into a ruddy glow, Mr. Gidge made a waddling exit from the cabin, bestowing on our lad another grunt as he passed him, and leaving an eddying wake of rank tobacco smoke to mark his passage.

For some time after this episode Cabot struggled to keep awake in the hope that White would return and answer some of his questions; but finally weariness overcame him, and he fell into a sleep that lasted without a break until after sunrise of the following morning.

In the meantime the little schooner had held her course, and swept onward past the flashing beacons of Cape Race, Cape Pine, and Cape St. Mary, until, at daylight, she was standing across the broad reach of Placentia Bay towards the bald headland of Cape Chapeau Rouge. She was making a fine run, and in spite of his weariness after a six hours' watch on deck, White Baldwin presented a cheery face to Cabot, as the latter vainly strove to recognise and account for his surroundings.

"Good morning," said the young skipper, "I hope you have slept well, and are feeling all right again."

"Yes, thank you," replied Cabot, suddenly remembering, "I slept splendidly, and am as fit as a fiddle. Have we made a good run?"

"Fine; we have come nearly a hundred miles from the place where we picked you up."

"Then we must be almost to St. Johns," suggested Cabot, tumbling from his bunk as he spoke. "I am glad, for it is important that I should get there as quickly as possible."

"St. Johns!" replied the other blankly. "Didn't you know that we had come from St. Johns, and were going in the opposite direction? Why, we are more than one hundred and fifty miles from there at this minute."

CHAPTER VI.

THE FRENCH SHORE QUESTION.

ALTHOUGH Cabot had had no reason to suppose that the "Sea Bee" was on her way to St. Johns, it had not for a moment occurred to him that she could be going anywhere else. Thus the news that they were not only a long way from the place he wished to reach, but steadily increasing their distance from it, so surprised him that for a moment he sat on the edge of his bunk gazing at the speaker as though doubting if he had heard aright. Finally he asked: "Where, then, are we bound?"

"To Pretty Harbour, around on the west coast, where I live," was the answer.

"I'd be willing to give you fifty dollars to turn around and carry me to St. Johns," said Cabot.

"Couldn't do it if you offered me a hundred, much as I need the money, and glad as I would be to oblige you, for I've got to get home in a hurry if I want to find any home to get to. You see, it's this way," continued White, noting

Cabot's look of inquiry, "Pretty Harbour being on the French shore——"

"What do you mean by the French shore?" interrupted Cabot. "I thought you lived in Newfoundland, and that it was an English island."

"So it is," explained White; "but, for some reason or other, I don't know why, England made a treaty with France nearly two hundred years ago, by which the French were granted fishing privileges from Cape Ray along the whole west coast to Cape Bauld, and from there down the east coast as far as Cape St. John. By another treaty made some years afterwards France was granted, for her own exclusive use, the islands of Miquelon and St. Pierre, that lie just ahead of us now.

"In the meantime the French have been allowed to do pretty much as they pleased with the west coast, until now they claim exclusive rights to its fisheries, and will hardly allow us natives to catch what we want for our own use. They send warships to enforce their demands, and these compel us to sell bait to French fishermen at such price as they choose to offer. Why, I have seen men forced to sell bait to the French at thirty cents a barrel, when Canadian and American fishing boats were offering five times that much for it. At the same time the French officers forbid

us to sell to any but Frenchmen, declaring that if we do they will not only prevent us from fishing, but will destroy our nets."

"I should think you would call on English warships for protection," said Cabot. "There surely must be some on this station."

"Yes," replied the other, bitterly, "there are, but they always take the part of the French, and do even more than they towards breaking up our business."

"What?" cried Cabot. "British warships take part with the French against their own people! That is one of the strangest things I ever heard of, and I can't understand it. Is not this an English colony?"

"Yes, it is England's oldest colony; but, while I was born in it, and have lived here all my life, I don't understand the situation any better than you."

"It seems to me," continued Cabot, "that the conditions here must be fully as bad as those that led to the American Revolution, and I should think you Newfoundlanders would rebel, and set up a government of your own, or join the United States, or do something of that kind."

"Perhaps we would if we could," replied White; "but our country is only a poor little island, with a population of less than a quarter of a million. If we should rebel, we would have

to fight both England and France. We should have to do it without help, too, for the United States, which is the only country we desire to join, does not want us. So you see there is nothing for us to do but accept the situation, and get along as best we can."

"Why don't you emigrate to the States?" suggested Cabot.

"Plenty of people whom I know have done so," replied the young Newfoundlander, "and I might, too, if it were not for my mother and sister; but I don't know how I could make a living for them in the States, or even for myself. You see, everything we have in the world is tied up right here. Besides, it would be hard to leave one's own country and go to live among strangers. Don't you think so?"

"How do you make a living here?" asked Cabot, ignoring the last question.

"We have made it until now by canning lobsters; but it looks as though even that business was to be stopped from this on."

"Why? Is it wrong to can lobsters?"

"On the French shore, it seems to be one of the greatest crimes a person can commit, worse even than smuggling, and the chief duty of British warships on this station is to break it up."

"Well, that beats all!" exclaimed Cabot. "Why is canning lobsters considered so wicked?"

"I don't know that I can explain it very clearly," replied the young skipper of the "Sea Bee," "but, so far as I can make out, it is this way: You see, the west coast of Newfoundland is one of the best places in the world for lobsters. So when the settlers there found they were not allowed to make a living by fishing, they turned their attention to catching and canning them. They thought, of course, that in this they would not be molested, since the French right was only to take and dry *fish*, which, in this country, means only codfish. They were so successful at the new business that after a while the French also began to establish lobster canneries. As no one interfered with them they finally became so bold as to order the closing of all factories except their own, and to actually destroy the property of such English settlers as were engaged in the business. Then there were riots, and we colonists appealed to Parliament for protection in our rights."

"Of course they granted it," said Cabot, who was greatly interested.

"Of course they did nothing of the kind," responded White, bitterly. "The English authorities only remonstrated gently with the French, who by that time were claiming an exclusive right to all the business of the west coast, and finally it was agreed to submit the whole ques-

tion to arbitration. It has never yet been arbitrated, though that was some years ago. In the meantime an arrangement was made by which all lobster factories in existence on July 1, 1889, were allowed to continue their business, but no others might be established."

"Was your factory one of those then in existence?" asked Cabot.

"It was completed, and ready to begin work a whole month before that date; but the captain of a French frigate told my father that if he canned a single lobster his factory would be destroyed. Father appealed to the commander of a British warship for protection; but was informed that none could be given, and that if he persisted in the attempt to operate his factory his own countrymen would be compelled to aid the French in its destruction. On that, father went to law, but it was not until the season was ended that the British captain was found to have had no authority for his action. So father sued him for damages, and obtained judgment for five thousand dollars. He never got the money, though, and by the time the next season came round the law regarding factories in existence on the first of the previous July was in force. Then the question came up, whether or no our factory had been in existence at that time. The French claim that it was not, because no work had been

done in it, while we claim that, but for illegal interference, work would have been carried on for a full month before the fixed date."

"How was the question settled?" asked Cabot.

"It was not settled until a few days ago, when a final decision was rendered against us, and now the property is liable to be destroyed at any minute. Father fought the case until it worried him to death, and mother has been fighting it ever since. All our property, except the factory itself, this schooner, and a few hundred acres of worthless land, has gone to the lawyers. While they have fought over the case, I have made a sort of a living for the family by running the factory at odd times, when there was no warship at hand to prevent. This season promises to be one of the best for lobsters ever known, and we had so nearly exhausted our supply of cans that I went to St. Johns for more. While there I got private information that the suit had gone against us, and that the commander of the warship 'Comattus,' then in port, had received orders to destroy our factory during his annual cruise along the French shore. The 'Comattus" was to start as soon as the 'Lavinia' arrived. The minute I heard this I set out in a hurry for home, in the hope of having time to pack the extra cases I have on board this schooner, and get them out of the way before the

warship arrives. That is one reason I am in such a hurry, and can't spare the time to take you to St. Johns. I wouldn't even have stopped long enough to investigate your raft if you had been a mile further off our course than you were."

"Then all my yesterday's rowing didn't go for nothing," said Cabot.

"I should say not. It was the one thing that saved you, so far as this schooner is concerned. I'm in a hurry for another reason, too. If the French get word that a decision has been rendered against us, and that the factory is to be destroyed, they will pounce down on it in a jiffy, and carry away everything worth taking, to one of their own factories."

"I don't wonder you are in a hurry," said Cabot. "I know I should be, in your place, and I don't blame you one bit for not wanting to take me back to St. Johns; but I wish you would tell me the next best way of getting there. You see, having lost everything in the way of an outfit it is necessary for me to procure a new one. Besides that and the business I have on hand, it seems to me that, as the only survivor of the 'Lavinia,' I ought to report her loss as soon as possible."

"Yes," agreed White, "of course you ought; though the longer it is unknown the longer the

'Comattus' will wait for her, and the more time I shall have."

"Provided some French ship doesn't get after you," suggested Cabot.

"Yes, I realise that, and as I am going to stop at St. Pierre, to see whether the frigate 'Isla' is still in that harbour, I might set you ashore there. From St. Pierre you can get a steamer for St. Johns, and even if you have to wait a few days you could telegraph your news as quickly as you please."

"All right," agreed Cabot. "I shall be sorry to leave you; but if that is the best plan you can think of I will accept it, and shall be grateful if you will set me ashore as soon as possible."

Thus it was settled, and a few hours later the "Sea Bee" poked her nose around Gallantry Head, and ran into the picturesque, foreign-looking port of St. Pierre. The French frigate "Isla," that had more than once made trouble for the Baldwins, lay in the little harbour, black and menacing. Hoping not to be recognized, White gave her as wide a berth as possible; but he had hardly dropped anchor when a boat—containing an officer, and manned by six sailors—shot out from her side, and was pulled directly towards the schooner.

CHAPTER VII.

DEFYING A FRIGATE.

"I WONDER what's up now?" said White Baldwin, in a troubled tone, as he watched the approaching man-of-war's boat.

"Mischief of some kind," growled David Gidge, as he spat fiercely into the water. "I hain't never knowed a Frencher to be good fur nawthin' else but mischief."

"Perhaps it's a health officer," suggested Cabot.

"It's worse than that," replied White.

"A customs officer, then?"

"He comes from the shore."

"Then perhaps it's an invitation for us to go and dine with the French captain?"

"I've no doubt it's an invitation of some kind, and probably one that is meant to be accepted."

At this juncture the French boat dashed alongside, and, without leaving his place, the lieutenant in command said in fair English:

"Is not zat ze boat of Monsieur Baldwin of Pretty Harbour on ze côte Française?"

"It is," replied the young skipper, curtly.

"You haf, of course, ze papaire of health, and ze papaire of clearance for St. Pierre?"

"No; I have no papers except a certificate of registry."

"Ah! Is it possible? In zat case ze commandant of ze frigate 'Isla' will be please to see you on board at your earlies' convenience."

"I thought so," said White, in a low tone. Then aloud, he replied: "All right, lieutenant. I'll sail over there, and hunt up a good place to anchor, just beyond your ship, and as soon as I've made all snug I'll come aboard. Up with your mud hook, Dave."

As Mr. Gidge began to work the windlass, Cabot sprang to help him, and, within a minute, the recently dropped anchor was again broken out. Then, at a sharp order, David hoisted and trimmed the jib, leaving Cabot to cat the anchor. The fore and main sails had not been lowered. Thus within two minutes' time the schooner was again under way, and standing across the harbour towards the big warship.

The rapidity of these movements apparently somewhat bewildered the French officer, who, while narrowly watching them, did not utter a word of remonstrance. Now, as the "Sea Bee" moved away, his boat was started in the same direction.

Without paying any further attention to it, White Baldwin luffed his little craft across the frigate's bow, and the moment he was hidden beyond her, bore broad away, passing close along the opposite side of the warship, from which hundreds of eyes watched his movements with languid curiosity.

The boat, in the meantime, had headed for the stern of the frigate, with a view to gaining her starboard gangway, somewhere near which its officer supposed White to be already anchoring. What was his amazement, therefore, as he drew within the shadow of his ship, to see the schooner shoot clear of its further side, and go flying down the wind, lee rail under. For a moment he looked to see her round to and come to anchor. Then, springing to his feet, he yelled for her to do so; upon which White Baldwin took off his cap, and made a mocking bow.

At this the enraged officer whipped out a revolver, and began to fire wildly in the direction of the vanishing schooner, which, for answer, displayed a British Union Jack at her main peak. Three minutes later the saucy craft had rounded a projecting headland and disappeared, leaving the outwitted officer to get aboard his ship at his leisure, and make such report as seemed to him best.

After the exciting incident was ended, and

the little "Sea Bee" had gained the safety of open water, Cabot grasped the young skipper's hand and shook it heartily.

"It was fine!" he cried, "though I don't see how you dared do it. Weren't you afraid they would fire at us?"

"Not a bit," laughed White. "They didn't realise what we were up to until we were well past them, and then they hadn't time to get ready before we were out of range. I don't believe they would dare fire on the British flag, anyway; especially as we hadn't done a thing to them. I almost wish they had, though; for I would be willing to lose this schooner and a good deal besides for the sake of bringing on a war that should drive the French from Newfoundland."

"But what did they want of you, and what would have happened if you had not given them the slip?"

"I expect they wanted to hold me here until they heard how our case had gone, so that I couldn't get back to the factory before they had a chance to run up there and seize it. Like as not they would have kept us on one excuse or another—lack of papers or something of that sort—for a week or two, and by the time they let us go some one else would have owned the Pretty Harbour lobster factory."

AT THIS THE ENRAGED OFFICER WHIPPED OUT A REVOLVER.

"Would they really have dared do such a thing?" asked Cabot, to whom the idea of foreign interference in the local affairs of Newfoundland was entirely new.

"Certainly they would. The French dare do anything they choose on this coast, and no one interferes."

"Well," said Cabot, "it seems a very curious situation, and one that a stranger finds hard to understand. However, so long as the French possess such a power for mischief, I congratulate you more than ever on having escaped them. At the same time I am disappointed at not being able to land at St. Pierre, and should like to know where you are going to take me next."

"I declare! In my hurry to get out of that trap, I forgot all about you wanting to land," exclaimed White, "and now there isn't a place from which you can get to St. Johns short of Port aux Basques, which is about one hundred and fifty miles west of here."

"How may I reach St. Johns from there?"

"By the railway across the island, of which Port aux Basques is the terminus. A steamer from Sidney, on Cape Breton, connects with a train there every other day."

"Very good; Port aux Basques it is," agreed Cabot, "and I shan't be sorry after all for a

chance to cross the island by train and see what its interior looks like."

So our young engineer continued his involuntary voyage, and devoted his time to acquiring all sorts of information about the great northern island, as well as to the study of navigation. In this latter line of research he even succeeded in producing a favorable impression upon David Gidge, who finally admitted that it wasn't always safe to judge a man from his appearance, and that this young feller had more in him than showed at first sight.

While thus creating a favorable impression for himself, Cabot grew much interested in the young skipper of the schooner. He was surprised to find one in his position so gentlemanly a chap, as well as so generally well informed, and wondered where he had picked it all up.

"Are there good schools at Pretty Harbour?" he asked, with a view to solving this problem.

"There is one, but it is only fairly good," answered White.

"Did you go to it?"

"Oh, no," laughed the other. "I went to school as well as to college in St. Johns. You see, father was a merchant there until he bought a great tract of land on the west coast. Then he gave up his business in the city and came over here to establish a lobster factory, which at that

time promised to pay better than anything else on the island. He left us all in St. Johns, and it was only after his death that we came over here to live and try to save something from the wreck of his property. Now I don't know what is to become of us; for, unless one is allowed to can lobsters, there isn't much chance of making a living on the French shore. If it wasn't for the others, I should take this schooner and try a trading trip to Labrador, but mother has become so much of an invalid that I hate to leave her with only my sister."

"What is your sister's name?"

"Cola."

"That's an odd name, and one I never heard before, but I think I like it."

"So do I," agreed White; "though I expect I should like any name belonging to her, for she is a dear girl. One reason I am so fond of this schooner is because it is named for her."

"How is that?"

"Why, it is the 'Sea Bee,' and these are her initials."

It was early on the second morning after leaving St. Pierre that the "Sea Bee" drifted slowly into the harbour of Port aux Basques, where the yacht-like steamer "Bruce" lay beside its single wharf. She had just completed her six-hour run across Cabot Strait, from North Sidney,

eighty-five miles away, and close at hand stood the narrow-gauge train that was to carry her passengers and mails to St. Johns. It would occupy twenty-eight hours in making the run of 550 miles from coast to coast, and our lad looked forward to the trip with pleasant anticipations.

But he was again doomed to disappointment; for while the schooner was still at some distance from the wharf, the train was seen to be in motion. In vain did Cabot shout and wave his cap. No attention was paid to his signals, and a minute later the train had disappeared. There would not be another for two days, and the young engineer gazed about him with dismay. Port aux Basques appeared to be only a railway terminus, offering no accommodation for travellers, and presenting, with its desolate surroundings, a scene of cheerless inhospitality.

"That's what I call tough luck!" exclaimed White Baldwin, sympathetically.

"Isn't it?" responded Cabot; "and what I am to do with myself in this dreary place after you are gone, I can't imagine."

"Seems to me you'd better stay right where you are, and run up the coast with us to St. George's Bay, where there is another station at which you can take the next train."

"I should like to," replied Cabot, "if you would allow me to pay for my passage; but I

don't want to impose upon your hospitality any longer."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed White. "You are already doing your full share of the work aboard here, and even if you weren't of any help, I should be only too happy to have you stay with us until the end of the run, for the pleasure of your company."

"That settles it," laughed Cabot. "I will go with you as far as St. George's, and be glad of the chance. But, while we are here, I think I ought to send in the news about the 'Lavinia.'"

As White agreed that this should be done at once, Cabot was set ashore, and made his way to the railway telegraph office, where he asked the operator to whom in St. Johns he should send the news of a wreck.

"What wreck?" asked the operator.

"Steamer 'Lavinia.'"

"There's no need to send that to anybody, for it's old news, and went through here last night as a press despatch. 'Lavinia' went too close to an iceberg, that capsized, and struck her with long, under-water projection. Lifted steamer from water, broke her back, boiler exploded, and that was the end of 'Lavinia.' Mate's boat reached St. Johns, and 'Comattus' has gone to look for other possible survivors."

As Cabot had nothing to add to this story, he

merely sent a short despatch to Mr. Hepburn, announcing his own safety, and then returned to the schooner with his news.

"Good!" exclaimed White, when he heard it. "I hope the 'Comattus' will find those she has gone to look for; and I'm mighty glad she has got something to do that will keep her away from here for a few days longer. Now, Dave, up with the jib."

CHAPTER VIII.

A CLASSMATE TO BE AVOIDED.

CABOT had been impressed by the rugged scenery of the Nova Scotia shore line, but it had been tame as compared with the stern grandeur of that unfolded when the "Sea Bee" rounded Cape Ray and was headed up the west coast of Newfoundland. He had caught glimpses of lofty promontories and precipitous cliffs as the schooner skirted the southern end of the island; but most of the time it had kept too far from shore for him to appreciate the marvellous details. Now, however, as they beat up against a head wind, they occasionally ran in so close as to be wet by drifting spray from the roaring breakers that ceaselessly dashed against the mighty wall, rising, grim and sheer, hundreds of feet above them. Everywhere the rock was stained a deep red, indicating the presence of iron, and everywhere it had been rent or shattered into a thousand fantastic forms. At short intervals the massive cliffs were wrenched apart to make room for narrow fiords, of unknown

depth, that penetrated for miles into the land, where they formed intricate mazes of placid waterways. Beside them there were nestled tiny fishing villages of whitewashed houses, though quite as often these were perched on apparently inaccessible crags, overlooking sheltered coves of the outer coast.

On the tossing waters fronting them, fleets of fishing boats, with sails tanned a ruddy brown, like those of the "Sea Bee," or blackened by coal tar, darted with the grace and fearlessness of gulls, or rested as easily on the heaving surface, while the fishermen, clad in yellow oilskins, pursued their arduous toil.

To our young American the doings of these hardy seafarers proved so interesting that he never tired of watching them nor of asking questions concerning their perilous occupation. And he had plenty of time in which to acquire information, for so adverse were the winds that only by the utmost exertion did White Baldwin succeed in getting his schooner to the St. George's landing in time for Cabot to run to the railway station just as the train from Port aux Basques was coming in.

The two lads exchanged farewells with sincere regrets, after White had extended a most cordial invitation to the other to finish the cruise with him, and visit his home at Pretty Harbour.

Much as Cabot wished to accept this invitation, he had declined it for the present, on the plea that he ought first to go to St. Johns. At the same time he had promised to try and make the proposed visit before leaving the island, to which White had replied:

"Don't delay too long, then, or you may not find us at home, for there is no knowing what may happen when the warships get there."

Even David Gidge shook hands with the departing guest, and said it was a pity he couldn't stay with them a while longer, seeing that he might be made into a very fair sort of a sailor with proper training.

With one regretful backward glance, Cabot left the little schooner on which he had come to feel so much at home, and sprinted towards the station, where was gathered half the population of the village—men, women, children, and dogs. The train was already at the platform as he made his way through this crowd, wondering if he had time to purchase a ticket, and he glanced at it curiously. It was well filled, and heads were thrust from most of the car windows on that side. Through one window Cabot saw a quartette of men too busily engaged over a game of cards to take note of their surroundings. As our lad's gaze fell on these, he suddenly stood still and stared. Then he turned, pushed out from the

crowd, and made his way back towards the landing as rapidly as he had come from it a few minutes before.

The "Sea Bee" was under way, but had not got beyond hail, and was put back when her crew discovered who was signalling them so vigorously.

"What is the matter?" inquired her young skipper, as Cabot again clambered aboard. "Did you miss the train after all?"

"No," replied Cabot. "I could have caught it; but made up my mind at the last moment that I might just as well go with you to Pretty Harbour now as to try and visit it later."

"Good!" cried White, heartily. "I am awfully glad you did. We were feeling blue enough without you, weren't we, Dave?"

"Blue warn't no name fer it," replied Mr. Gidge. "It were worse than a drop in the price of fish; an' now I feel as if they'd riz a dollar a kental."

"Thank you both," laughed Cabot. "I hadn't any idea how much I should hate to leave the old 'Bee' until I tried to do it. You said there was another station that I could reach from your place, didn't you?" he added, turning to White.

"Yes. There is one at Bay of Islands that can be reached by a drive of a few hours from

Pretty Harbour; and I'll carry you over there any time you like," replied the latter.

"That settles it, then; and I'll let St. Johns wait a few days longer."

So the little schooner was again headed seaward, and set forth at a nimble pace for her run around Cape St. George and up the coast past Port au Port to the exquisitely beautiful Bay of Islands, on which Pretty Harbour is located; and, as she bore him away, Cabot hoped he had done the right thing.

When commissioned to undertake this journey that was proving so full of incident, our young engineer had been only too glad of an excuse to break his engagement with Thorpe Walling; for, as has been said, the latter was not a person whom he particularly liked. Walling, on the other hand, had boasted that the most popular fellow in the Institute had chosen above all things to take a trip around the world in his company, and was greatly put out by the receipt of Cabot's telegram announcing his change of plan. The more Thorpe reflected upon this grievance the more angry did he become, until he finally swore enmity against Cabot Grant, and to get even with him if ever he had the chance.

He was provoked that his chosen companion should have dismissed him so curtly, without any intimation of what he proposed to do, and this he

determined to discover. So he went to New York and made inquiries at the offices of the company acting as Cabot's guardian; but could only learn that the young man had left the city after two private interviews with President Hepburn. At the club where Cabot had lunched on the day of his departure, Thorpe's appearance created surprise.

"Thought you had started off with Grant on a trip around the world?" said one member in greeting him.

"No," replied Walling; "we are not going."

"But he sailed two days ago. At least, he said that was what he was about to do when he bade me good-bye on his way to the steamer."

"What steamer, and where was she bound?" asked Thorpe.

"Don't know. He only said he was about to sail."

"I'll not be beaten that way," thought Walling, angrily; and, having plenty of money to expend as best suited him, he straightway engaged the services of a private detective. This man was instructed to ascertain for what port a certain Cabot Grant had sailed from New York two days earlier, and that very evening the coveted information was in his possession.

"Sailed on the 'Lavinia' for St. Johns, Newfoundland, has he?" muttered Thorpe. "Then

I, too, will visit St. Johns, and discover what he is doing. I might as well go there as anywhere else; and perhaps Grant will find out that it would have been wiser to confide in an old friend than to treat him as shabbily as he has me."

Having reached this decision, Walling took a train from New York, and, travelling by way of Boston, Portland, and Bangor, crossed the St. Croix River from Maine into New Brunswick at Vanceboro. From there he went, via St. John, N.B., and Truro, Nova Scotia, to Port Mulgrave, where he passed over the Strait of Canso to Cape Breton. Across that island his route lay through the Bras d'Or country to North Sidney, at which point he took steamer for Port aux Basques and the Newfoundland railway that should finally land him in St. Johns. On this journey he became acquainted with several Americans, with whom he played whist, which is what he was doing when his train pulled up at the St. George's Bay platform.

At sight of his classmate, Cabot became instantly desirious of avoiding him and the embarrassing questions he would be certain to ask. Although our young engineer could not imagine why Thorpe Walling had come to Newfoundland, he instinctively felt that the visit had something to do with his own trip to the island. He

knew that Thorpe delighted to pry into the secrets of others; and also that he was of a vindictive nature, quick to take offence, and unscrupulous in his enmities. Therefore, as his instructions permitted him to visit whatever part of Newfoundland he chose, he decided to avoid St. Johns for the present rather than risk the results of a companionship that now seemed so undesirable.

Somewhat earlier on that same day one of Thorpe's travelling companions, named Gregg, spoke to him of Newfoundland's mineral wealth, and referred particularly to the Bell Island iron mines.

"Yes," replied Walling, who had never before heard of Bell Island, "they must be immensely valuable."

"Oh, I don't know," said the other, carelessly. "Several American companies are trying to get control of them; but perhaps they are not what they are cracked up to be after all."

"Isn't a New York man by the name of Hepburn one of the interested parties?" asked Thorpe, at a venture.

"Yes, he is," responded Mr. Gregg, turning on him sharply. "Why, do you know him?"

"I can't say that I know him; but I know a good deal about him, and have every reason to believe that he has just sent an acquaintance of

mine, a young mining engineer, up here to examine that very property."

"Is he an expert?"

"Oh, yes. He and I were classmates at a technical institute."

"Then you also are a mining engineer?"

"I am."

"Have you come to Newfoundland to investigate mineral lands?"

"Not exactly; though I may do something in that line if I find a good opening. At present I am merely on a pleasure trip."

"I see, and I am glad to have made your acquaintance, as I am somewhat interested in mineral lands myself. When we reach St. Johns I hope you will introduce me to your friend, and it may happen that I can return the favour by putting you on to a good thing."

"Certainly, I will introduce you if we run across him," replied Thorpe. "At the same time I hope you won't mention having any knowledge of his business, as he is trying to keep it quiet."

"Like most of us who have 'deals' on hand," remarked the other, with a meaning smile. "But it is hard to hide them from clever chaps like yourself."

At which compliment, Thorpe, who had only been making some shrewd guesses, looked wise, but said nothing.

It happened that these two were playing whist when the train reached St. George's Bay, and Mr. Gregg remarked to his partner:

"There's a chap staring at this crowd as if he knew some of us."

Thorpe glanced from the window, and started from his seat with an exclamation. At the same moment Cabot Grant turned away and hurried from the station.

"Do you know him?" asked Mr. Gregg.

"He is the very person I was speaking to you about a while ago," replied Thorpe.

CHAPTER IX.

SENDING IN A FALSE REPORT.

At sight of Cabot, Thorpe Walling's instinct had been to leave the car and follow him; but the thought of his luggage, which he knew he could not get off in time, caused him to hesitate, and then it was too late, for the train was again in motion.

"The young man did not seem particularly anxious to meet his old classmate," remarked Mr. Gregg. "In fact, it rather looked as though he wished to avoid recognition."

Thorpe pretended to be too busy with his cards to make reply to this suggestion; but an ugly expression came into his face, and, from that moment, he hated Cabot Grant. When, on the following day, he reached St. Johns and learned of the loss of the "Lavinia," with all on board, except those saved in the mate's boat, he was more perplexed than ever. Cabot's name was published as one of those who had gone down with the ill-fated steamer, and yet he had cer-

tainly seen him alive and well only the day before. What could it mean?

"Do you suppose Hepburn knows of his escape?" asked Mr. Gregg, who was stopping at the same hotel, and to whom Thorpe confided this mystery.

"I haven't an idea."

"What do you say to wiring and finding out? It can't do us any harm, and might gain us an insight into the old man's plans up here."

"I should say it was a good idea."

As a result of this desire for information the following telegram was sent to the president of the Gotham Trust and Investment Company:

"St. Johns, N'f'l'd.—Here all right. What shall I do next? C. G."

And the answer came promptly:

"Congratulations. Send B. I. report. If in need of funds, draw. H."

"That settles it!" exclaimed Mr. Gregg, exultingly. "Hepburn is after Bell Island, and your friend was sent here to report upon its value. Now, it will be a pity if the old man doesn't get his information, which he isn't likely to do for some time with that young chap over on the west coast. Some one ought to send him a report."

"I have a mind to do it myself," said Thorpe, reflectively.

"It would be an awfully decent thing for you to do. Be a good joke on your friend, too, and make him feel ashamed of himself for cutting you so dead yesterday, when he finds it out. He is bound to get into trouble if some sort of a report isn't sent in, now that he is known to have escaped from the wreck."

"Confound him!" exclaimed Thorpe. "I don't care how soon he gets into trouble; nor how much."

"Oh, come. That isn't a nice way to speak of an old friend and classmate," remarked Mr. Gregg, reprovingly. "Now, I always feel sorry when I see a decent young chap like that throwing away a good chance, and want to help him if I can. So in the present case, I think we really ought to send in a report that will satisfy old Hepburn, and keep the boy solid with his employers. I shouldn't know how to word it myself, but if you, with your expert knowledge of the subject, will make it out, of course after taking a look at the mine, I'll see that you don't lose anything by your kindness."

"All right," replied Thorpe, who was quite sharp enough to comprehend the other's meaning. "I'll do it."

So the two conspirators drove to the pictur-

esque fishing village of Portugal Cove, where they hired a boat to carry them across to Bell Island. There they paid a hasty visit to the mine, which Mr. Gregg plausibly belittled and undervalued, until Thorpe really began to consider it a greatly overestimated piece of property, and this idea he embodied in a report that he wrote out that very evening.

"I'm glad to see that you think as I do concerning the real worthlessness of Bell Island," remarked Mr. Gregg, gravely, as he glanced over the paper, "and the man who would have anything to do with it after reading this must be a greater fool than I take old Hepburn to be."

On the following day a type-written copy of Thorpe's report was made, signed "C. G.," and forwarded by mail to the president of the Gotham Trust and Investment Company. As a result, a telegram was received a week later at the Bank of Nova Scotia in St. Johns addressed to Cabot Grant, and desiring him to return at once to New York. As the bank people wired back that they had no knowledge of any such person, Mr. Hepburn in reply requested them to keep a sharp lookout for a young man of that name, who would shortly present a letter of credit to them, and provide him with a ticket to New York on account of it, but nothing more. Mr. Hepburn also explained that, as Cabot

Grant's guardian, he had the right to thus limit his ward's expenditures.

Thus our lad fell into disgrace with his employer, who knew, as well as any man living, the exact status of the Bell Island iron mine, and had only requested Cabot to report on it in order to test his fitness for other work.

While the correspondence with the bank was being carried on, Messrs. Walling and Gregg watched for the arrival of the young engineer, whom they expected by every train. They also anxiously awaited the news that the Hepburn syndicate had withdrawn its offer for the Bell Island property, in which event it would fall, at a greatly reduced price, to the company represented by Mr. Gregg.

Totally unconscious of all this, Cabot Grant was at that very time in a remote corner of the west coast, happily engaged in aiding certain of its inhabitants to discomfit the combined naval forces of two of the most powerful governments of the world. Moreover, he had become so interested in this exciting occupation, as well as in certain discoveries that he was making, as to have very nearly lost sight of his intention to visit the capital of the island.

When he reëmbarked on the "Sea Bee" at St. George's Bay, he fully intended to catch the train of two days later at the station to which

White had promised to convey him. He was glad of a chance to view some more of that magnificent west coast scenery, and when the little schooner finally rounded South Head, and was pointed towards the massive front of Blomidon, which David Gidge called "Blow-me-down," he felt well repaid for his delay by the enchanting beauty of the Bay of Islands that lay outspread before them.

Soon after passing South Head, the "Sea Bee," with flags flying from both masts, slipped through a narrow passage into the land-locked basin of Pretty Harbour. On its further shore stood a handful of white houses, and a larger building that fronted the water.

"That's our factory!" cried White, "and there is our house, on the hillside, just beyond. See, the one with the dormer windows. There's Cola waving from one of them now. Bless her! She must have been watching, to sight us so quickly. Oh, I can't wait. Dave, you take the 'Bee' up to the wharf. Mr. Grant will help you, I know, as well as excuse me if I go ashore first."

"Of course, I will," replied Cabot; and in another minute the young skipper was sculling ashore in the dinghy, while the schooner drifted more slowly in the same direction.

When they finally reached the factory wharf

White was on hand to meet them, and beside him stood the slender, merry-eyed girl for whom the schooner had been named. She unaffectedly held out a hand to Cabot when they were introduced, and at once invited him to the house to meet her mother.

"Yes," said White, "you two go along, and don't wait for me. You see," he added, apologetically, to Cabot, "there's been a great catch of lobsters, and if I can only get them packed before we are interfered with, we'll make a pretty good season of it, after all."

So the new-comer walked with Cola up the straggling village street, past a score of fisher cottages, each with a tiny porch, pots of flowers in the front windows, and a bit of a garden fenced with wattles, to keep out the children, goats, dogs, and pigs, that swarmed on all sides. At length they came to the neatly kept and comfortable-looking house, overlooking the whole, that White Baldwin called home. Here Cabot was presented to the sweet-faced invalid mother, who sat beside a window of the living-room, from which she could look out on the little harbour, and who was eager to learn the details of his recent experiences that White had only found time to outline to her.

Both mother and daughter listened with deepest interest while Cabot told of the loss of

the "Lavinia," and when he had finished Mrs. Baldwin said:

"You certainly made a wonderful escape, and I am grateful that my boy was granted the privilege of rescuing you from that dreadful raft. I am confident, also, that you have been brought to this place for some wise purpose, and trust that you are planning to remain with us as long as your engagements will permit."

"Thank you, madam," replied Cabot. "I wish I might accept your hospitality for a week, at least. For I am certain I should find much to enjoy in this delightful region. I feel, however, that I ought to catch to-morrow's train, as it is rather necessary for me to reach St. Johns without further delay."

"It seems queer," remarked Cola, "that this stupid place can strike even a stranger as being delightful, since there is no one to see but fisherfolk, who can talk of nothing but fish, and there isn't a thing to do but watch the boats go and come. For my part, I am so tired of it all that I wish something would happen to send us away from here forever."

"My dear!" said Mrs. Baldwin to Cola, reprovingly.

"Some one seems to have found an occupation here in collecting a cabinet of specimens," suggested Cabot, indicating, as he spoke, some

"DID THIS COME FROM ABOUT HERE?"

shelves covered with bits of rock, that had attracted his attention.

"Yes," admitted Cola, "I have found some amusement in gathering those things; but I don't know what half of them are, and there is no one here to tell me."

"Possibly I might help you to name some of them," said Cabot, "as I have a bowing acquaintance with geology."

"Oh! can you?" cried the girl. "Then I wish you would, right away, for I am almost certain that several of them contain minerals, and I want awfully to know if they are gold."

The next moment the two young people were standing before the cabinet, deep in the mysteries of periods, ages, formations, series, and other profound geologic terms. All at once Cabot paused, and, holding a bit of serpentine in his hand, asked:

"Did this come from about here?"

"Yes; all of them did."

"Could you show me the place, or somewhere near where you found it?"

"I think I could, if we had time; but not if you are going away in the morning, for it would take at least half a day."

"Well," said Cabot, "I believe I might wait over long enough for that, and guess I won't start for St. Johns to-morrow, after all."

CHAPTER X.

CABOT ACQUIRES A LOBSTER FACTORY.

THE Baldwins were greatly pleased at Cabot's decision to wait over a train; for, as Mrs. Baldwin said, a desirable guest in that out-of-the-way corner of the world was the greatest of luxuries. White was glad to prolong the friendship so strangely begun, and also to escape a present necessity for leaving his work to carry Cabot to the distant railway station, while Cola was delighted to have found what she termed a geologic companion. After it was arranged that these two should set forth early the following day on a search for specimens, Cabot strolled down to the factory to learn something of the process of canning lobsters.

He was amazed at the change effected in so short a time. When he landed at Pretty Harbour the factory had been closed, silent, and deserted. Now it was a hive of bustling activity, in which every available person of the village, including women and children, was hard at work. Fires were blazing under a number of

great kettles half filled with boiling water. Into these, green lobsters were tossed by barrowfuls, to be taken out a little later smoking hot and coloured a vivid scarlet. On the packing tables their shells were broken, and the extracted meat was put into cans, to which covers, each with a tiny hole in the middle, were soldered. Then the filled cans were steamed, by trayfuls, to exhaust their air; a drop of solder closed each vent, and they were ready for labelling and packing in cases. White Baldwin, in person, superintended all these operations, while David Gidge saw to the unloading of the "Sea Bee," and kept sharp watch on a gang of shouting urchins, who were withdrawing the live lobsters from the outside salt-water pens, in which they had been kept while awaiting their fate.

White was in high spirits, for the travelling agent of a St. Johns business house had just offered a good cash price for his entire pack.

"Of course," the young proprietor said to Cabot, as they viewed the busy scene, "we won't make anything like what we would if we were allowed a whole uninterrupted season; but, if they will only let us alone for a week, I'll pack a thousand cases. Those will yield enough to support us for a year, and before that is up I'm not afraid but that I'll find some other way of earning a living. Now, if I can only get sufficient help,

I'm going to run this factory night and day for the next week, unless compelled by force to stop sooner."

Cabot was already so interested that he promptly volunteered to aid in making the all-important pack.

"I don't know anything about the business," he said, "but if you can make use of me in any way, I shall be only too glad of a chance to repay a small portion of the great debt I owe you."

"Nonsense!" laughed White. "You don't owe me a thing, and I don't want you to feel that way. At the same time I should be ever so glad of your help in getting things well started; for just now one strong fellow like you would be worth a dozen of those children."

So, a few minutes later, Cabot, clad in overalls and an old flannel shirt of White's, was as hard at work as though the canning of lobsters was the business of his life. Far into the night he laboured, only pausing long enough to go up to the house for supper; and, on the following morning, he was actually pleased that a heavy rain storm should postpone the trip for specimens, furnish him with an excuse for prolonging his stay, and leave him at liberty to resume his self-imposed task in the factory.

The storm lasted for two days, at the end of which time half the pack had been made, and

Cabot had become so familiar with all details of the work as to be a most valuable assistant. On the third day, the supply of lobsters on hand being exhausted, operations were suspended until the boats could return with a new catch; and, as the weather was again fine, Cabot and Cola set forth on their geological exploration.

It was a glorious day, with a sky of deepest blue; the hot sunshine tempered by a cool breeze pouring in from the sea, and all nature sparkling with joyous life. To Cabot, who had thought of Newfoundland as a place of perpetual fog, and almost constant rain, the whole scene was a source of boundless delight. As the two young people climbed the steep ascent behind the village, new beauties were unfolded with each moment, until, when they reached the crest, and could look far out over the islanded bay, with the placid cove and its white hamlet nestling at their feet, Cabot declared his belief that there was not a more exquisite view in all the world.

After gazing their fill, the explorers plunged into a sweet-scented forest of spruce and birches, threaded by narrow wood roads, and tramped for miles, stopping now and then to examine some outcropping ledge or gather a handful of snow-white capilear berries. But the main object of their quest, the copper-bearing serpentine, was not found until they had gained the summit of

the Blomidon range and were in full view of the sea. Then they came to a distinct outcrop of mineral-bearing rock that caused the eyes of the young geologist to glisten with anticipation.

While he chipped off specimens, studied the trend of the ledge, and made such estimates of its character as were possible from surface indications, his companion climbed a rocky eminence that, short of Blomidon itself, commanded the most extended view of any in that region. She had hardly gained the summit when she uttered a cry that attracted Cabot's attention and caused him to hasten in her direction. In a few moments he met her running breathlessly down the hill.

"What is it?" he asked. "Are you hurt?"

"A warship coming up the coast," she panted. "I saw it plainly, and we must get back with the news as quick as we can."

Much as Cabot hated to give over the exploration of that wonderful copper-bearing ledge, he did not hesitate to obey the imperative call of friendship, and accompanied Cola with all speed back to the village. When they reached it they found White jubilant over the extraordinary catch of lobsters that was even then being brought in.

"Hurrah!" he cried, as Cabot appeared. "Biggest catch of the season, and you are just in time

to help pack it away. But what brings you back so early? I thought you were off for all day."

"Oh, White, they are coming!" gasped Cola.

"Who are coming?"

"A warship. I saw it from Maintop."

"British or French?"

"I don't know. I only knew it was a warship because it was so much bigger than the 'Harlaw' and had tall masts."

"Well, it don't make any difference," growled White, "one is just as bad as another, and our business is ruined anyway. Why couldn't they have kept away for three days longer?"

"What will they do?" inquired Cabot, curiously.

"I don't know," replied White, bitterly. "Either destroy or seize the whole plant and leave us to starve at our leisure. Now, I suppose we might as well go up to the house and tell mother. There's no use doing any more work under the circumstances."

"I don't see why not," objected Cabot, who was not accustomed to throwing up a fight before it was begun. "There is a possibility that the vessel may not be a warship after all, and another that she is not coming to this place. Even if she does, you don't know that she has any warrant for interfering with your business. So, if I were you, I'd go right on with the work and keep at

it until some one compelled me to stop. I say, though, speaking of warrants gives me an idea. All you want is three days' delay, isn't it?"

"That is what I want most just now," replied White.

"Well, then, why not place this property in the name of some friend—David Gidge, for instance—and when those men-of-war people begin to make trouble let him ask them whose factory it is they are after. They will say yours, or your mother's, of course. Then he'll speak up and say in that case they've come to the wrong place, since this is the property of Mr. David Gidge, while their warrant only mentions that of Mrs. Whiteway Baldwin. It'll be a big bluff, of course, and won't work for very long, but it may puzzle 'em a bit and give the delay of proceedings that you require."

"I believe you are right about keeping on with the work," replied White, thoughtfully; "though I am not so sure about the other part of your scheme. Anyway, I must run to the house for a little talk with mother, and if you'll just set things going in the factory I shall be much obliged."

"All right," agreed Cabot, "I'll shake 'em up."

And he was as good as his word, for when, after an absence of more than an hour, White

reappeared on the scene he found the factory in full blast, with its operatives working as they had never worked before, and Cabot Grant, the most disreputable-looking of the lot, urging them on by voice and example to still greater exertions. He seemed to be everywhere and doing everything at once.

"Hello, old man! We've got greenbacks to burn, and we're a-burning 'em," he cried cheerily as he paused to greet his friend, and at the same time dash the streaming perspiration from his face with a grimy hand. "What's the news?"

"The news is that you are a trump!" exclaimed White, "and that in spite of all you are doing for us we want you to grant us still another favour."

"Name it, my boy, and if it is anything within reason, including a defiance of the whole British navy, I'll do it," laughed Cabot.

"I hope you will, for it is something that we all want you to do very much," responded White. "You see it's this way. I spoke of your suggestion to mother, and she thought so well of it that I went to the magistrate and got him to draw up a deed transferring this property, for a nominal consideration, to a friend. Now it is all ready for signatures, and we want you to be that friend."

"Me!" cried Cabot, completely staggered by

this unexpected result of his own planning. "You can't mean that. Why, you don't know anything about me. For all you know I might never give the property back to you."

"We are willing to risk that," replied White, "and would rather trust you to act for us in this matter than any one else we know. It is a big favour to ask, I know; but you said you felt indebted to me and only wanted a chance to pay off the debt, so I thought perhaps—but if you don't want to do it, of course——"

"But I will, if you really want me to," cried Cabot. "I have always longed to own a lobster factory. It never entered my head when I proposed the plan that I would help carry it out; but if you think I can be of the slightest assistance in that way, why of course I am only too glad."

So the papers constituting Cabot Grant, Esq., sole owner of the Pretty Harbour lobster factory were duly signed and recorded; and at sunset of that very evening our hero stood regarding his suddenly acquired property with the air of one who is dubiously pleased at a prospect.

CHAPTER XI.

BLUFFING THE BRITISH NAVY.

CABOT was not long allowed to enjoy his sense of possession before experiencing some of the anxieties of proprietorship; for, even as he stood overlooking his newly acquired factory, a clipper-built schooner, showing the fine lines and tall topmasts of an American, rounded the outer headland and entered the harbour. For a few minutes our young engineer, who was learning to appreciate the good points of a vessel, watched her admiringly as she glided across the basin and drew near the factory wharf. Then he was joined by White, who had been detained at the house, and they went down together to greet the new-comer.

She proved to be the fishing schooner "Ruth" of Gloucester, and her skipper, who introduced himself as Cap'n Ezekiel Bland, explained that he had come to the coast after bait.

"I 'lowed to get it in St. George," he said, "but there was a pesky French frigate that wouldn't allow the natives to sell us so much as

a herring, though they had a-plenty and were keen to make a trade for the stuff I've got aboard."

"What kind of stuff?" asked Cabot, curiously.

"Flour and pork mostly. You see, I'm bound on a long trip, and being obliged to lay in a big supply of grub anyway, thought I might as well stow a few extra barrels to trade for bait; but now it looks like I couldn't get rid of 'em unless I give 'em away."

"There's plenty of bait in the bay," remarked White.

"Yes, so I've heard, and a plenty of frigates, too. The Frenchy must have suspicioned where I was bound, for he has followed us up sharp, and as we came by South Head I seen him jest a bilin' along 'bout ten mile astarn, and now he'll poke into every hole of the bay till he finds us. Anyhow, there won't be no chance to trade long as he's round, for you folks don't dare say your soul's your own when there's a Frenchy on the coast."

"Nor hardly at any other time," remarked White, moodily.

"There's another one, too—Britisher, I reckon—went up the bay towards Humber Arm ahead of us. I only wish the two tarnal critters would get into a scrap and blow each other out of the water. Then there'd be some chance

for honest folks to make a living. Now I'm up a stump and don't know what to do, unless some of you people can let me have a few barrels of bait right off, so's I can clear out again to-night."

"There isn't any to be had here," replied White, "for this is a lobster factory, and the whole business of the place, just at present, is catching and canning lobsters. You'll find some round at York Harbour, though."

"No use going there now, nor anywhere else, long as that pesky Frenchman's on the lookout. Can't think what made him leave St. Pierre in such a hurry. Thought he was good to stay there a week longer at any rate. But say, who owns this factory?"

"This gentleman is the proprietor," replied White, indicating his companion as he spoke.

"Hm!" ejaculated the Yankee skipper, regarding Cabot with an air of interest. "Never should have took you to be the owner of a Newfoundland lobster factory. Sized you up to be a Yankee same as myself, and reckoned you was here on a visit. Seeing as you are the boss, though, how'd you like to trade your pack for my cargo—lobsters for groceries? Both of us might make a good thing out of it. Eh? I'll take all the risks, and neither of us needn't pay no duty."

"Can't do it," replied Cabot promptly, "because, in the first place, I'm not in the smuggling business, and in the second our whole pack is engaged by parties in St. Johns."

"As for the smuggling part," responded Captain Bland, "I wouldn't let that worry me a little bit. Everybody smuggles on this coast, which is neither British, French, nor Newfoundland. So a man wouldn't rightly know who to pay duties to, even if he wanted to pay 'em ever so bad, which most of us don't. If you have engaged your goods to St. Johns, though, of course a bargain is a bargain. Same time I could afford to pay you twice as much as any St. Johns merchant. But it don't matter much one way or another, seeing as the idea of trading was only an idea as you may say that just popped into my head. Well, so long. It's coming on dark, and I must be getting aboard. See you to-morrow, mebbe."

As the Yankee skipper took his departure, Cabot and White turned into the factory, where all night long fires blazed and roared beneath the seething kettles.

Until nearly noon of the following day the work of canning lobsters was continued without interruption, and pushed with all possible energy. Then a boy, who had been posted outside the harbour as a lookout, came hurrying in to

report that he had seen a naval launch steaming in that direction.

The emergency for which Cabot had been planning ever since he consented to become the responsible head of the concern was close at hand, and he at once began to take measures to meet it.

"Draw your fires," he shouted. "Empty the kettles and cool them off. Pass all cans, empty or full, up into the loft, and then every one of you clear out. Remember that you are not to know a thing about the factory, if anybody asks questions, and you don't even want to give any one a chance to ask questions if you can help it. Run up to the house," he added, turning to the boy who had brought tidings of the enemy's approach, "and tell Mrs. Baldwin, with my compliments, that the carriage is ready for her drive."

So thoroughly had everything been explained and understood beforehand, and so promptly were these orders obeyed, that, half an hour later, when a jaunty man-of-war's launch, flying a British Jack, entered the little harbour, every preparation had been made for her reception. The factory, closed and silent, presented no outward sign that it had been in operation for months. Those who had recently worked so industriously within its weather-stained walls now lounged about their own house doors, or on the

village street, as though they had nothing to do, and limitless leisure in which to do it. White Baldwin, with his mother and sister, had driven away in a cart, leaving their tenantless house with closed doors and tightly shuttered windows. Cabot Grant, with hands thrust into his trousers pockets, leaned against a wharf post and surveyed the oncoming launch with languid curiosity. The Yankee schooner swung gracefully at her moorings, and from her a boat was pulling towards shore; while on the deck of the "Sea Bee," also anchored in the stream, David Gidge placidly smoked a pipe.

The launch slowed down as it neared him, and an officer inquired in the crisp tones of authority:

"What place is this?"

Deliberately taking the pipe from his mouth, and looking about him as though to refresh his memory, Mr. Gidge answered:

"I've heard it called by a number of names."

"Was one of them Pretty Harbour?"

"Now that you mention it, I believe it were."

"What kind of a building is that?" continued the officer, sharply, pointing to the factory as he spoke.

David gazed at the building with interest, as though now seeing it for the first time.

"Looks to me like a barn," he said at length.

"Same time it might be a church, though I don't reckon it is."

"Isn't it a lobster factory?"

"They might make lobsters in it, but I don't think they does. Mebbe that young man on the wharf could tell ye. He looks knowing."

Disgusted at this exhibition of stupidity, and muttering something about a chuckle-headed idiot, the officer motioned for his launch to move ahead, and, in another minute, it lay alongside the wharf.

"Is this the Pretty Harbour lobster factory?" demanded the officer as he stepped ashore.

"I believe it was formerly used as a lobster cannery," replied Cabot, guardedly, "but no business of the kind is being carried on here at present."

"It is owned by the family of the late William Baldwin, is it not?"

"No, sir."

"Who then does own the property?"

"I do."

"You!" exclaimed the officer. "And pray, sir, who are you?"

"I am an American citizen named Grant, and have recently acquired this property by purchase."

"Indeed. Then of course you possess papers showing the transfer of ownership."

"Certainly."

"I should like to look at them."

"They have been sent for record to the county seat, where any one who chooses may examine them."

"Where shall I find a person by the name of Whiteway Baldwin?"

"I can't tell you, as he has left the place."

"Is any member of his family here?"

"No. All of them went with him."

"Have you the keys of this factory?"

"I have."

"Then I must trouble you to open it, as I wish to look inside."

As the two entered the building, and the officer caught sight of the machinery used in canning lobsters, he said:

"I am very sorry, Mr. Grant, but I have orders to destroy everything found in this factory that has been, or may be, used in the canning of lobsters."

"Those orders apply to the property of Mrs. William Baldwin, do they not?"

"They do."

"Then, sir, since she no longer owns this building, and I do, together with all that it contains, I warn you that if you destroy one penny's worth of my property I shall at once bring suit for damages against both you and your commanding of-

ficer. I can command plenty of money and a powerful influence at home, both of which shall be brought to bear on the case. If it goes against you my claim will be pressed by the American Government at the Court of St. James. Moreover, articles concerning the outrage will be published in all the leading American papers. Public sentiment will be aroused, and you doubtless know as well as any one whether England, with all the troubles now on her hands, can afford to incur the ill will of the American people for the sake of a pitiful lobster factory. You can see for yourself that no illegal business—nor in fact business of any kind—is being carried on here at present, and, under the circumstances, I would advise you to take time for serious reflection before you begin to destroy the property of an American citizen."

Bewildered by this unexpected aspect of the situation, and remembering how a suit brought by the proprietors of that same factory had gone against a former British commander who had interfered with its operations, the officer hemmed and hawed and made several remarks uncomplimentary to Americans, but finally decided to lay the case before his captain. As he reëntered his launch he said:

"Of course you understand, sir, that no work of any kind is to be done in this building between

this and the time of my return, nor may anything whatever be removed from it."

"I understand perfectly," replied Cabot. Yet within half an hour the employees of the factory had returned to their tasks, fires had been relighted, kettles were boiling merrily, and the place again hummed with busy activity.

"Young feller, it was the biggest bluff I ever see, and it worked!" exclaimed Captain Ezekiel Bland a few minutes earlier, as he stood on the wharf with Cabot watching the departing launch.

CHAPTER XII.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE COME TO BLOWS.

THE Baldwins returned to their home shortly after the departure of the discomfited officer, and listened with intense interest to Cabot's report of all that had taken place during their absence.

"No one but a Yankee would have thought of such a plan!" exclaimed White, "or had the cheek to carry it out. But it makes me feel as mean as dirt to have run away and left you to face the music alone."

"You needn't," replied Cabot, "for your absence was one of the most important things, and I couldn't possibly have carried out the programme if you had been there. Now, though, we've got to hustle, for I expect that navy chap will be back again to-morrow, and whatever we can accomplish between now and then will probably end the lobster-packing business so far as this factory is concerned."

That night the workers received a reinforcement, as unexpected as it was welcome, from the crew of the Yankee schooner, who, led by Cap-

tain Bland, came to assist their fellow countryman in his struggle against foreign oppression. With this timely and expert aid, the canning business was so rushed that by ten o'clock of the next morning, when the lookout again reported a launch to be approaching, every can was filled and the pack was completed. More than half of it had also been removed from the factory and stowed aboard the "Sea Bee," ready for delivery to the St. Johns purchaser.

"I wish he were here now," said White, "so that we might settle up our business with him before those chaps arrive."

"Well, he isn't," replied Cabot, "and we must protect the goods as best we can until he comes. In the meantime I think you'd better disappear and leave me to manage alone, the same as I did yesterday."

"No. I won't run away again. I'm going to stay and face the music."

"All right," agreed Cabot. "Perhaps it will be just as well, since the factory is closed sure enough this time. You must let me do all the talking, though, and perhaps in some way we'll manage to scare 'em off again."

"If we could have just one day more we'd be all right," said White, "but there they come. Only, I say! They are Frenchmen this time. See the flag."

Sure enough. Instead of flying the British Union Jack the launch that now appeared in the harbour displayed the tri-colour of the French Republic. Thus, when Cabot and White reached the wharf, they were just in time to greet their acquaintance of St. Pierre, the lieutenant of the French frigate "Isla," whom White had so neatly outwitted in that port. As he stepped ashore he was accompanied by a sharp-featured, black-browed individual, whom White recognised as M. Delom, proprietor of a French lobster factory located on another shore of the bay.

"That chap has come for pickings and stealings," he remarked in a low tone.

"Shouldn't wonder," returned Cabot, "for he looks like a thief."

"Ah, ha, Monsieur Baldwin! I haf catch you zis time, an' you cannot now gif me what you call ze sleep," cried the French lieutenant. "Also I am come to siz your property, for you may no more can ze lob of ze Française. Behol'! I have ze aut'orization."

So saying, the officer drew forth and unfolded with a flourish a paper that he read aloud. It was an order for the confiscation and removal of all property owned by a person, or persons, named Baldwin, and used by them contrary to law in canning lobsters on the French territory

of Newfoundland, and it was signed: "Charmian, Capitan de Frégate."

"So, Monsieur Baldwin," continued the officer, when he had finished the reading, "you will gif to me ze key of your factory zat I may from it remof ze materiel. I sall also take your schooner for to convey it to ze factory of M. Delom. Is it plain, ma intention?"

"Your intention is only too plain," responded White. "You are come to aid that thief in stealing my property; but you are too late, for the factory no longer belongs to the Baldwin family."

"Ah! Is it so? Who zen belong to it?"

"This gentleman is the present owner," replied White, "and you must arrange your business with him."

"Who is he?" demanded the Frenchman, surveying Cabot contemptuously from head to foot. "But I do not care. Ze material mus all ze same be remof."

"I am an American citizen," interrupted Cabot, "and I forbid you to touch my property. If you do so I shall claim damages through the American government, and in the meantime I shall call on the British frigate now in this bay for protection."

"For ze Americains I do not care," cried the Frenchman, assuming a theatrical attitude.

"For l'Anglais, pouf! I also care not. When it is my duty I do him. Ze material mus be remof. Allons, mes garçons."

A dozen French bluejackets, armed with cutlasses and pistols, had gathered behind their leader, and now these sprang forward with a shout, clearing a way through the collected throng of villagers. Advancing upon the main entrance to the factory, they quickly battered down its door and rushed inside. With them went swarthy-faced Delom, who gloated over the spoil that now seemed within his grasp, and which would make his own factory the best equipped on the coast. He was especially pleased to note the pack all boxed ready for shipment, and our lads saw him direct the officer's attention to it. As a result the latter gave an order, and in another minute a file of French bluejackets, each with a case of canned lobster on his shoulder, was marching towards the door.

Just as they reached it there came a shout and a tramp of heavy feet from the outside. Then a stern voice cried:

"Halt! What are you doing here, you French beggars? Drop those boxes and clear out."

As the Frenchmen halted irresolute, their officer, who could not see what was going on, but imagined that some of the villagers were blocking the entrance, shouted for them to march on

and clear away the canaille who dared oppose them.

The French bluejackets attempted to obey, but, with their first forward movement, they were met by an inrush of sturdy British sailors, who sent them and their burdens crashing to the floor in every direction. Some of them as they regained their feet drew their cutlasses, while others fell upon the new-comers with their fists. A pistol shot rang out, and a British sailor pitched heavily forward. At the same instant both officers sprang into the mêlée, beating back their men with the flat of their swords, and fiercely ordering them to desist from further fighting.

So sharp had been the brief encounter between these hereditary enemies, that as they sullenly withdrew their clutch from each other's throats a British sailor remained on the floor striving to staunch the blood that spurted from a bullet wound in his leg, while near at hand lay a French bluejacket, as white and motionless as though dead. Another Frenchman had a broken arm, while several others on both sides looked askance at their enemies from blackened eyes and swollen faces.

"Sir!" cried the French lieutenant, the moment order was so far restored that he could make himself heard, "I am bidden by my com-

OTHERS FELL ON THE NEW-COMERS WITH THEIR FISTS.

mandant, ze Chevalier Charmian, capitan de frigate 'Isla,' to remof all material from zis building, and in his name I protest against zis mos outrage interference."

"Sir," answered the British officer, "I am ordered by my captain to destroy all property contained in this building, and not permit the removal of a single article."

"But I will not allow it destroyed!"

"And I will not allow it removed."

For a moment the two glared at each other in speechless rage. Then the Frenchman said:

"As humanity compels me to gif immediate attention to my men, wounded by ze unprovoked assault of your barbarians, I sall at once carry zem to my sheep, where I sall immediately also report zis outrage to my commandant."

"Same here," replied the Englishman, laconically, and with this both officers ordered their men to fall back to the launches, carrying with them their wounded comrades.

During the progress of this thrilling episode our two lads had watched it in breathless excitement without once thinking of leaving the building, though a back door opened close at hand. So intent were they upon what was taking place that they did not notice the approach of a third person until he was close beside them and had addressed White by name. He was the St. Johns

travelling man, who had engaged the Baldwin pack for his firm, and now he said in low, hurried tones:

"You fellows want to skip out of this while you can, for that British officer has got orders to arrest you both and carry you to St. Johns for trial. Charges—contempt of court and carrying on an illegal business. Awfully sorry I can't take your goods, but order has been issued that any one handling them will also be arrested and subject to heavy fine. Hurry up. They are making a move, and he'll be looking for you directly. Don't let on that I gave you the tip."

With this the man moved away, and without exchanging a word our lads slipped out of the nearby door.

So fully was the British officer occupied in getting his men back to their launch without making another attack upon their hated rivals, that not until all were safely on board did he remember that he had been charged to bring off two prisoners. Now he was in a quandary. Those whom he desired were nowhere to be seen, and he dared not leave his men, whose fighting blood was still at fever heat, long enough to go in search of them. Also the French launch was about to depart, and it would never do for the captain of the "Isla" to be informed of the recent unfortunate encounter in advance of his

own commander. So, with a last futile look ashore, he reluctantly gave the order to shove off, and side by side, their crews screaming taunts at each other, the two launches raced out of the harbour.

As Cabot and White watched them from a place of snug concealment, the latter heaved a sigh of relief, saying:

"Well, I'm mighty glad they're gone, and haven't got us with them; but I do wish that fight could have lasted a few minutes longer."

"Wasn't it lovely!" retorted Cabot, "and isn't the lobster industry on this coast just about the most exciting business in the world!"

CHAPTER XIII.

A PRISONER OF WAR.

WITH the disappearance of the launches our lads realised that it was time to make new plans for immediate action. So, as they walked slowly back towards the village, they earnestly discussed the situation.

"It is too bad that I have drawn you into such a scrape," said White, "and the very first thing for me to do is to make an effort to get you out of it. So, if you like, I will drive you over to the station this afternoon, where you can take the morning train for St. Johns."

"No," replied Cabot, "that wouldn't do at all. In the first place, you didn't draw me into the scrape. I went into it with my eyes open, and am quite ready to stand by what I have done. In fact I rather enjoy it than otherwise. At the same time I do not propose to be arrested if I can help it, and for that reason do not care to visit St. Johns at present. Even at the railway station we should be very likely to meet and be recognised by some of our recent unpleasant

naval acquaintances. Besides, I am going to see this thing through, and shall stand by you just as long as I can be of any service, for I hope you don't think so meanly of me as to imagine that I would desert in the time of his trouble the fellow who saved my life."

"I never for one moment thought meanly of you," declared White, "and I know that in rescuing you from that raft I also gained for myself one of the best friends I ever had. For that very reason, though, I don't want to abuse your friendship."

"All right," laughed Cabot. "Whenever I feel abused I'll let you know. And now, it being settled that we are to fight this thing out together, what do you propose to do with the pack we have worked so hard to make?"

"I don't know," replied White, despondently; "but, as it is legally your property, I think you ought to decide what is to be done with it."

"Nonsense!" retorted Cabot. "It no more really belongs to me than it does to that black-faced Frenchman. At the same time I'd fight rather than let him have it."

"I'd toss every case into the sea first," cried White, "and everything the factory contains besides."

"'Same here,' as the Englishman said; but I guess we can do better than that. Why not ac-

cept Captain Bland's offer, and trade it to him for groceries?"

"I thought you were opposed to receiving smuggled goods?"

"So I am on general principles," admitted Cabot, "but circumstances alter cases. I consider the highway robbery that two of the most powerful nations of the world are attempting right here a circumstance strong enough to alter any case. So I would advise you to accept the only offer now remaining open. You will at least get enough groceries to keep your family supplied for a year."

"I should say so, and for two years more, provided the goods didn't spoil."

"Then you might sell what you couldn't use."

"Where?" asked White. "Not in Newfoundland, for they would be seized as contraband in any part of the island. Besides, you seem to forget that as both of us are liable to arrest, we are hardly in a position to go into the grocery business just at present."

"That's so. Well, then, why not carry them somewhere else in the 'Sea Bee'? To Canada, or—I have it! You said something once about making a trading trip to Labrador, and now is the very opportunity. Why shouldn't we take the goods to Labrador? I don't believe we'd be arrested in that country, even for smuggling,

and they must need a lot of provisions up there. It's the very thing, and the sooner we can arrange to be off the better."

"But you don't want to go to Labrador," protested White.

"Don't I? There's where you make a big mistake; for I do want to go to Labrador more than to any other place I know of. Also I would rather go there with you in the 'Sea Bee' than in any other company, or by any other conveyance. So there you are, and if you don't invite me to start for Labrador before that brass-bound navy chap has a chance to arrest me, I shall consider myself a victim of misplaced confidence."

"I do believe you have hit upon the very best way out of our troubles," said White, thoughtfully. "If I could arrange to leave mother, and if the Yankee captain would make a part payment in cash, so that she and Cola could get along until my return, I believe I would go."

"You can leave your mother and sister now as well as when you went to St. Johns, and better, for I am sure David Gidge would look out for them during the month or so that we'll be away."

"But David would have to go along to help work the schooner."

"I don't see why. You and I could manage

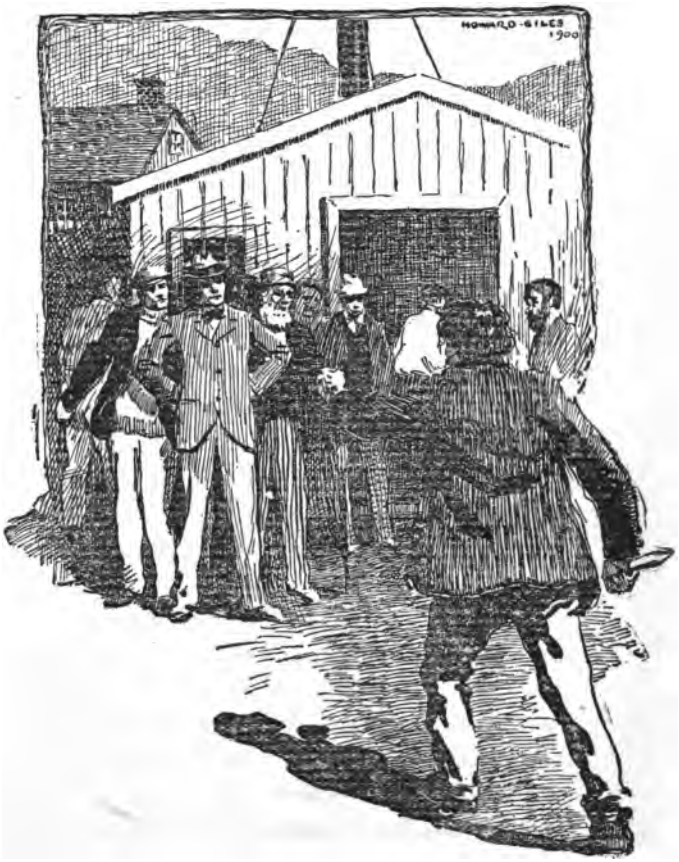
without him, and so save his wages, or his share of the voyage, which would amount to the same thing. If one man can sail a 30-foot boat around the world alone, as Captain Slocum did, two of us certainly ought to be able to take a 50-foot schooner up to Labrador and back. Any way I'm game to try it, if you are, and I'd a heap rather risk it than stay here to be arrested. There is Captain Bland now. Let's go and talk with him."

The Yankee skipper stood near the shattered door of the factory in company with a number of villagers, all of whom seemed greatly interested in something going on inside. As our lads drew near these made way for them, and Captain Bland said:

"'Pears like the new owner is making himself perfectly at home."

Inside the factory the Frenchman Delom, who had remained behind to make good his claim to the confiscated property of his rival, was too busily at work to pay any attention to the disparaging remarks and muttered threats of those whom he had forbidden to enter. He had collected all the tools and lighter machinery into a pile ready for removal, and was now marking with his own stencil such of the filled cases as remained on the lower floor.

So dreaded was the power of France on that



LIVID WITH RAGE, THE FRENCHMAN WHIPPED OUT AN UGLY-LOOKING KNIFE.

English coast that up to that moment no one had dared interfere with him, but Cabot Grant was not troubled by a fear of France or any other nation, and, as he realised what was going on, he sprang into the building. The next instant our young football player had that Frenchman by the collar and was rushing him towards the doorway. From it he projected him so violently that the man measured his length on the ground a full rod beyond it.

Livid with rage at this assault, the Frenchman scrambled to his feet, whipped out an ugly-looking knife, and started towards Cabot with murderous intent.

"No you don't," shouted Captain Bland, and in another moment Monsieur Delom's arms were pinioned behind him, while he struggled helplessly in the iron grasp of the Yankee skipper.

"I think we'd better tie him," remarked the latter quietly. "'Tain't safe to let a varmint like this loose on any community."

White produced a rope and was stepping forward with it, but Cabot took it from him, saying: "For the sake of your family you mustn't have anything to do with this affair." So he and Captain Bland bound the Frenchman hand and foot, took away his knife, and carried him for present safe keeping to a small, dark building that was used for the storage of fish oil. Here they locked

him in, and left him to meditate at leisure on the fate of those who have done to them, what they would do to others if they could.

"Well," said Captain Bland, at the conclusion of this incident, "you young fellers always seem to have something interesting on hand; what are you going to do next? Are you going to skin out, or wait for the return of the French and English fleets? I'd like to know, 'cause I want to be getting a move on; but if there's going to be any more fun I expect I'll have to wait and take it in."

"I expect our next move depends very largely on you, captain," replied White. "Are you still willing to trade your cargo for our pack?"

"I might be, and then again I mightn't," answered the Yankee, as he meditatively chewed a blade of grass. "You see, the risk of the thing has been so increased during the past two days that I couldn't make nigh so good an offer now as I could at first. Also, here's so many claiming the pack of this factory that I'm in considerable doubt as to who is the rightful owner. First there's the Baldwin interest and the American interest, represented by you two chaps. Then there's the St. Johns interest, represented by that travelling man; the British interest, which is a mighty powerful one, seeing that it is supported by the English navy; the French government

interest, which is likewise backed up by a fleet of warships, and the French factory interest, represented by our friend in limbo, who, though he isn't saying much just now, seems to have a pretty strong political pull. So, on the whole, the ownership appears to be muddled, and the pack itself subject to a good many conflicting claims. I expect also that the factory workmen and the lobster catchers have some sort of a lien on it for services rendered."

"Look here, Captain Bland," said Cabot, "we understand perfectly that all you have just said is trade talk, made to depreciate the value of our goods, and you know as well as I do that they have but one rightful owner."

"Who is that?" asked the skipper with an air of interest.

"Mrs. William Baldwin."

"But I thought she deeded the property to you."

"So she did; but as I am not yet of age that deed is worth no more than the paper on which it is written."

"You don't mean it. What a whopping big bluff it was then!" cried Captain Bland, admiringly. "Beats any I ever heard of, and I'm proud to know 'twas a Yankee that worked it. What you say does alter the situation considerable, and I'd like to have Miss Baldwin's own views on the subject of a trade."

In accordance with this wish an adjournment was made to the house, where Mrs. Baldwin assured the Yankee skipper of her willingness to abide by any agreement made with him by her son and Mr. Grant.

"Which so simplifies matters, ma'am," replied the captain, "that I think we may consider a trade as already effected, and make bold to say that this season's pack of the Pretty Harbour lobster factory will be sold somewhere's else besides Newfoundland."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE "SEA BEE" UNDER FIRE.

THE arrangement made with the Yankee skipper was satisfactory, save in one respect. He was willing to trade provisions for canned lobsters to the extent of taking the entire pack, and he also offered to remove the machinery outfit of the factory on the chance of finding a purchaser for it in the States, but he refused to make any cash advance on the goods.

"I'm willing," he said, "to risk considerable for the sake of being accommodating, and with the hope of making a little something, but I can't afford to risk cold cash."

"I don't see how we can make a trade, then," remarked White, as he and Cabot discussed the situation. "It will take every penny I've got to pay off the hands, and though I believe we could make a good thing out of a Labrador trip, I can't leave mother and Cola without a cent while I'm away. If he would only let me have fifty dollars——"

"He won't, though," interrupted Cabot, "but

I will. I have got just that amount of money with me, and, as I shan't have any use for it in Labrador, I should be more than pleased to leave it here for safe keeping."

White at first refused to take his friend's money; but on Cabot's declaring that he had plenty more on deposit in St. Johns, he gratefully accepted the loan, which he promised to repay from the very first sale of goods they should make.

Everything being thus arranged, preparations for departure were pushed with all speed. Such of the pack as remained in the factory was hurried aboard the "Ruth" by a score of willing workers, who also transferred to her every tool and bit of machinery, including the big kettles. Then she and the "Sea Bee," the latter manned by two of the Yankee sailors, with David Gidge as pilot, sailed from the harbour, and were lost to sight beyond its protecting headland.

The next hour was spent in settling with the lobster catchers and those who had been employed in the factory, each of whom was warned to give no information concerning the movements of the two schooners. This was barely finished when the boy who had been posted outside immediately after the departure of the naval launches came hurrying in with news that both of them were returning.

"My!" cried Cabot, "but I'd like to see the fun when they get here."

"I am afraid you'd see more than enough of it," replied White, "for they'll be keen on getting us this time. So we'd best be starting. Hold on a minute, though; I want to leave proof behind that we haven't gone off with either of the schooners."

With this he ran down to the oil house, in which their well-nigh forgotten prisoner was still confined. Flinging open the door, he said, in a tone of well-feigned regret:

"It is too bad, Monsieur Delom, that you should have been kept so long in this wretched place, but I dared not attempt your release while those terrible Yankees were here. Now, however, they are gone and you are once more free. Also, as I realise that I can no longer maintain my factory here, you are at liberty to make what use you please of its contents. Accept my congratulations on your good fortune, monsieur. As for me, I must now leave you to prepare for my journey to St. Johns."

With this White bade the bewildered Frenchman a mocking adieu, and left him still blinking at the sunlight from which he had been so long secluded.

A few minutes later the Baldwin house again stood closed and tenantless, while a cart driven

by Cola, and accompanied by the two young men on foot, climbed the hill back of the village by a road leading to the nearest railway station. Monsieur Delom witnessed this departure, as did many others, but no one saw the cart leave the highway a little later and turn into a dim trail leading through an otherwise pathless forest. After a time it emerged from this on another road and came to a farmhouse to which Mrs. Baldwin had previously been taken. Here mother and son bade each other farewell, while the former also prayed for a blessing upon the stranger who had so befriended them, and whose fortunes had become so curiously linked with theirs. Then the cart with Cola still acting as driver rattled away, and was quickly lost to sight.

It lacked but an hour of sunset when our refugees reached a pocket on the outer coast, in which the two schooners lay snugly, side by side, nearly filling the tiny harbour. On the beach David Gidge already waited, and, as the lads transferred their few effects to the boat that had brought him ashore, he climbed stiffly into the cart which Cola was to guide back over the way it had just come.

"Good-bye, Cola," said Cabot, as he held for a moment the hand of the girl he had come to regard almost as a sister. "Try and have a lot of specimens ready for me when we come back."

"Good-bye, sister!" cried White. "Take care of mother, and don't let her worry about us. We'll be back almost before you have time to miss us. Good-bye, David! I trust you to look out for them because you have promised."

"Oh! how I wish I were a boy and going with you," exclaimed Cola. "It is so stupid to be left behind with nothing to do but just wait. Do please hurry back."

"All right," replied her brother. "With good luck we'll sail into Pretty Harbour inside of a month, and perhaps with money enough to take us all to the States."

"Oh, wouldn't that be splendid! Do get started, for the sooner you are off the quicker you'll come back," cried the girl.

"That's so. Come on, Cabot," and in another minute the boat had shot out from the beach, while the cart was slowly climbing the rugged trail that led inland.

On reaching the schooners our lads found Captain Bland impatiently awaiting them, since the transfer of goods was nearly completed, and he was anxious to get his compromising cargo away from the coast patrolled by those meddlesome frigates.

"Let me once get beyond the three-mile limit," he said, "and I wouldn't mind meeting a fleet of 'em; if either one of 'em caught me in

here, though, I'd not only stand to lose cargo, but schooner as well. So I reckon we'd best get a move on at once, and talk business while we tow out."

As our lads were equally desirous of gaining a safe distance from the authorities they had so openly defied, they readily agreed to Captain Bland's proposal, and four dories, each manned by a couple of stalwart Yankee fishermen, were ordered to tow the schooners from their snug hiding place. While this was going on, and White was busily engaged on the deck of the "Sea Bee," Cabot and Captain Bland were examining invoices and price lists in her cabin.

"Here's a list of all I've put aboard," said the latter, "and you'll see I've only made a small freight charge over and above the cost price in Boston. Same time I've allowed for your pack the full market price on canned lobsters according to latest St. Johns quotations, and you ought not to sell a single barrel at less 'n one hundred per cent. clear profit. As for the kettles and tools, here's an order on my owners in Gloucester for them, or what they'll fetch less a freight charge, provided I get 'em there all right; but I want both you and young Baldwin to sign this release that frees me from all claims for loss of property in case anything happens to 'em."

"I am perfectly willing to sign it," replied

Cabot, "because I have no ownership in the property, but I shouldn't think Baldwin would care to give such a release."

"I guess he will, though," said the skipper.

And he was right, for White readily consented to sign the paper, saying that the property would have been lost anyhow if it had been left behind. "I have also full faith that Captain Bland will do the right thing about it," he added, "for, while I have always found you Yankees sharp as knives in a trade, I have yet to meet one whom I wouldn't trust."

"Thank you, Mr. Baldwin," said the skipper, "and I shall try my best not to be the first to abuse your confidence."

So the paper was signed, and White had barely laid down his pen when the occupants of the cabin were startled by a loud cry from above, followed almost immediately by a distant shot. Hurrying on deck they found that the schooner had reached open water and was beginning to feel the influence of an offshore breeze. At the same time the man whom White had left at the tiller was pointing up the coast, where they caught sight of a steam launch that had just cleared South Head.

"He fired a shot at us," announced the steersman.

"That's all right 'long's he didn't hit us," re-

plied Captain Bland. "It is our French friend, and he only took that way of hinting that he wished us to wait for him. I don't think we can afford the time just now, though—leastways, I can't. Hello there in boats! Drop your tow lines and come alongside."

"Do you think there is any chance of our getting away from him?" asked Cabot.

"Dunno. Mebbe, if the breeze freshens, as I believe it will. Anyhow, I'm going to give him a race for his money. Good-bye! Good luck, and I hope we'll meet again before long."

So saying Captain Bland, taking the steersman with him, stepped into a dory that had come alongside and was rowed towards his own schooner. He had hardly gained her deck before she set main and jib topsails and a big main staysail. Our lads also sprang to their own sails, and spread to the freshening breeze every stitch of canvas that the "Sea Bee" possessed. When they next found time to look at the "Ruth," White uttered an exclamation of astonishment, for she had already gained a good half mile on them and was moving with the speed of a steam yacht.

"There's no chance of the Yankee being caught," he said enviously, "but there's a mighty big one that we will."

Although the "Sea Bee" was holding a course

in the wake of the "Ruth," and was heeled handsomely over before the same freshening breeze, she was not doing so well by a half, and it was evident that in a long run the launch must overtake her.

"She is certainly gaining on us," said Cabot, after a long look, and he had hardly spoken before a second shot from the launch plumped a ball into the water abreast of the little schooner and not two rods away.

White, who was at the tiller, glanced nervously backward. "Do you want to heave to and let them overhaul us?" he asked.

"Certainly not," replied Cabot promptly. "They have no right to meddle with us out here, and I would keep straight on without paying the slightest attention to them until they either sink us or get alongside."

"All right," laughed the other. "I only wanted to make sure how you felt. Some fellows, you know, don't like to have cannon balls fired at them."

CHAPTER XV.

OFF FOR LABRADOR.

SLOWLY but surely the launch gained on the flying schooner, until, as the sun was sinking behind its western horizon of water, she fired a shot that passed through the "Sea Bee's" mainsail and fell a hundred yards beyond her.

"Wh-e-e-w!" exclaimed White, as he glanced up at the clean-cut hole. "That's rather too close for comfort, and I shouldn't be surprised if the next one made splinters fly. However, it will soon be dark, and then, if we are not disabled, we may be able to give them the slip."

"I don't believe there's going to be another shot," cried Cabot, who was gazing eagerly astern. "No—yes—hurrah! They are turning back. They have given it up, old man, and we are safe. Bully for us! I wonder what possesses them to do such a thing, though, when they had so nearly caught us?"

"Can't imagine," replied White, who was also staring at the launch, which certainly had circled back and was making towards the place whence

she had come. "They are afraid to be caught out at sea after dark perhaps. I always understood that Frenchmen made mighty poor sailors. Lucky thing for us she wasn't a British launch, for they'd have kept on around the world but what they'd had us."

In justice to the Frenchmen it should be said that their reason for turning back, which our lads did not learn until long afterwards, was the imminent exhaustion of their coal supply, which, not calculated for a long cruise, would barely serve to carry them back to the Bay of Islands.

By the time the launch was lost to sight in the growing dusk the "Ruth" had also disappeared. She was headed southward when last seen, and now White said it was time that they, too, were turning towards their ultimate destination. So, topsails and mainstaysail were taken in, and the helm was put down until fore and mainsails jibed over. Then sheets were trimmed until the little schooner, with lee rail awash, was running something east of north, on an easy bowline, carrying a bone in her teeth and leaving a bubbling wake trailing far astern. With everything thus satisfactorily in shape, White lighted the binnacle lamp, and giving Cabot a course to steer, went below to prepare the first meal of their long cruise. "You must keep a sharp lookout," he said as he disappeared down the companionway,

"for I don't dare show any lights. So if we are run into we'll have only ourselves to blame."

Left thus to his own devices, Cabot realised for the first time the responsibility of his position and began to reflect seriously upon what he had done. Until this time one disturbing event had followed another so rapidly that he had been borne along almost without a thought of what he was doing or of the consequences. As a result, instead of carrying out the purpose for which he had been sent to Newfoundland, and studying its mineral resources, he now found himself forced into flight for having defied the authorities of the island, embarked upon a doubtful trading venture into one of the wildest and least known portions of the continent, and, with but a slight knowledge of seamanship, engaged in navigating a small sailing vessel across one of its stormiest seas. What would his guardian and employer say could he know all this and see him at the present moment?

"I wish he could, though," exclaimed Cabot half aloud, "for it would be fun to watch his look of amazement and hear his remarks. I suppose he is wondering what has become of that Bell Island report I was to send in the first thing, and I guess he'll have to wonder for some time longer, as St. Johns is about the last place I feel like visiting just at present. I certainly have

made a mess of my affairs, though, so far, and it looks as if I had only just begun, too. At the same time I don't see how I could have acted differently. I tried hard enough to reach St. Johns, and would have got there all right if it hadn't been for this factory business. But when the fellow who saved my life got into trouble, from which I could help him out, I'm sure even Mr. Hepburn would say I was bound to do it. Besides, I have found one promising outcrop of copper, and now I'm off for Labrador; so perhaps things will turn out all right after all. Anyway I'm learning how to sail a boat, and that is something every fellow ought to know. I wish it wasn't so awfully dark though, and that White would hurry up with that supper, for I am powerful hungry. How good it smells, and what a fine chap he is. Falling in with him was certainly a great bit of luck. But how this confounded compass wabbles, and how the schooner jumps off her course if I lift my eyes from it for a single instant. I don't see why she can't go straight if I hold the tiller perfectly still. There's a star dead ahead, and I guess I'll steer by it. Then I can keep the sharp lookout White spoke of at the same time."

Thus deciding, the anxious helmsman fixed his gaze upon the newly risen star that he had just discovered, and wondered admiringly at its rapid

increase in brilliancy. After a little he rubbed his eyes and looked again at two more stars that had suddenly appeared above the horizon directly below the first one.

"Never saw red and green stars before," Cabot muttered. "Must be peculiar to this high latitude. Wonder if they can be stars, though? Oh! what a chump I am. White! I say, White, come up here quick!"

In obedience to this summons the young skipper thrust his head from the companionway.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Don't know exactly," replied Cabot, "but there is a lighthouse or a dock or something right in front of us."

"Steamer!" cried White as he sprang on deck and glanced ahead. "Keep her away, quick. I don't want them to sight us."

"Steamer," repeated Cabot as he obeyed this order and let the schooner fall off to leeward. "I never thought of such a thing as a steamer away up here. Do you mean that she is a frigate?"

"No," laughed White. "There are other steamers besides frigates even in these waters, and that is one of them. She is the 'Harlaw,' from Flower Cove, near the northern end of the island, and bound for Halifax. It's mighty lucky she didn't pass us by daylight."

"Why?"

"Because she is already heading in for the Bay of Islands and would have reported us as soon as she got there. Then we would have had a frigate after us sure enough."

"But how do you know she's a steamer? Mightn't she be a sailing vessel?"

"Not with that white light at her foremast head. Sailing vessels aren't allowed to show any above their side lights. Now go below and eat your supper while I take her."

This eating alone was such an unpleasant feature of the cruise that, as Cabot sat down to his solitary meal, he regretted having persuaded White to leave David Gidge behind.

"I am afraid this going to sea shorthanded will prove a false economy after all," he said to himself, thereby reaching a conclusion that has been forced upon seafaring men since ships first sailed the ocean.

Finishing his supper as quickly as possible, Cabot rejoined his companion, and begged him also to hurry that they might bear each other company on deck.

"All right," agreed White, "only, of course, I shall be longer than you were, for I have to wash and put away the dishes."

"Oh, bother the dishes!" exclaimed Cabot. "Let them go till morning."

"Not much. We haven't any too many

dishes as it is, nor a chance of getting any more, and if I should leave them where they are we probably wouldn't have any by morning. Besides, it wouldn't be tidy, and an untidy ship is worse than an untidy house, because you can't get away from it. But I won't be long."

True to his promise, White, bringing with him a heavy oilskin coat and an armful of blankets, speedily rejoined his comrade, who was by this time shivering in the chill night air.

"Put this on," said the young skipper, tendering Cabot the oilskin, "and then I am going to ask you to stand first watch. I will roll up in these blankets and sleep here on deck, so that you can get me up at a moment's notice. You want to wake me at midnight, anyhow, when I will take the morning watch."

"Very well," agreed Cabot resignedly. "I suppose you know what is best to be done, but it seems to me that we are arranging for a very lonesome cruise on regular Box and Cox lines."

As White had no knowledge of Box and Cox he did not reply to this grumble, but, rolling up in his blankets until he resembled a huge cocoon, almost instantly dropped asleep.

During the next four hours Cabot, shivering with cold and aching with weariness, but never once allowing his tired eyes to close, remained at his post. Through the black night, and over the

still darker waters, he guided the flying schooner according to the advice of the unstable compass card that formed the only spot of light within his whole range of vision. At the same time, knowing how little of skill he possessed in this new line of business, and not yet having a sailor's confidence in the craft that bore him, he was filled with such a fear of the night, the wind, the leaping waters, and a thousand imaginary dangers that his hardest struggle was against an ever-present impulse to arouse his sleeping comrade. But he would not yield, and finally had the satisfaction of coming unaided to the end of his watch.

"Midnight, and all hands on deck," he shouted, and White, springing up, asked:

"What's happened? Anything gone wrong?"

"Nothing yet," replied Cabot, "but something will happen if you leave me at this wretched tiller a minute longer."

"I won't," laughed the other. "It will only take me half a minute to get an eye-opener in shape of a cup of cold tea, and then you can turn in."

When Cabot was at length free to seek his bunk he turned in all standing, only kicking off his boots. The very next thing of which he was conscious was being shaken and told that breakfast was ready.

It was broad daylight; the sun was shining; the breeze had so moderated that White had been able to leave the schooner to herself with a lashed helm while he prepared breakfast, and as Cabot tumbled out he wondered if he had really been anxious and fearful a few hours earlier.

All that day and through the following night our lads kept watch and watch while the "Sea Bee" travelled up the coast. Early on the second morning they passed Flower Cove, and from this point White headed directly across the Strait of Belle Isle, which, here, is but a dozen miles in width. Then, as Newfoundland grew dim behind them, a new coast backed by a range of lofty hills came into view ahead; and, in answer to Cabot's eager question, White said:

"Yes, that is Labrador, and those are the Bradore Hills back of Forteau."

CHAPTER XVI.

MOSQUITOES OF THE FAR NORTH.

WHILE Cabot gazed eagerly at the lofty but still distant coast towards which all their hopes were now directed, his companion was casting anxious glances to the eastward, where a low hanging bank of cloud betokened an advancing fog. He had good reason to be apprehensive, for this northern entrance to the gulf of St. Lawrence forms the shortest route for steamers plying between Canadian and European ports. Consequently many of them use it during the brief summer season when it is free from ice. At the same time it is a stormy stretch of water, tormented by powerful currents, and generally shrouded in fog.

Early in the season countless icebergs, borne southward by the Arctic current that hugs the Labrador coast, drift aimlessly over its troubled surface, and even at midsummer it is a passage to be dreaded. White, being familiar with its many dangers, had good cause for anxiety, as he saw one of them about to enfold his little craft.

He consulted the compass, took his bearings with the utmost care, and then as Cabot, finding his view obscured, turned to him with a look of inquiry, remarked:

"Yes, we are in for it, and you'd better keep a sharp lookout for steamers. It wouldn't be very pleasant to run one down and sink it, you know."

"I should say not," responded Cabot as he started for the bow of the schooner, where, steadying himself by a stay, he peered into the thickening mist curtain. For half an hour or so he saw nothing, though during that time the hoarse bellowing of a steam whistle, approaching closely and then receding, told of a passing ship. While the lookout was still listening to this a black form, magnified to gigantic size by his apprehensions and the opaqueness through which he saw it, loomed up directly ahead and apparently not a rod away. With a sharp cry of warning the lad sprang aft, while a yell of dismay came from the stranger. The next moment, both vessels having been headed sharply into the wind, lay side by side, heaving and grinding against each other, with their sails slatting noisily overhead.

As our lads realised the true character of the other craft, they were ready to laugh at their fright of a minute earlier, for she was only an

open fishing boat, carrying three men, a woman, and a couple of children.

"We took ye for a steamer, first sight," remarked one of the men.

"And we did the same by you," laughed White. "Who are you and where are you bound?"

"Mail boat from L'Anse Au Loup for Flower Cove," replied the man, "and as we're not sure of our compass we'd be obleeged if you'd give us a bearing."

"With pleasure. Come aboard and take it for yourself. If you'll wait just a minute I'll have a letter ready for you."

So saying the young skipper dived below and hastily pencilled a line to his mother, telling of their safety up to that time.

While he was thus engaged Cabot learned that owing to the recent arrival of a steamer from St. Johns provisions were plentiful on that part of the Labrador coast, but were believed to be scarce further north.

As a result of this information the "Sea Bee" was headed more to the eastward after the boats had again parted company, for, as White said, there was no use wasting time running in to Blanc Sablon, Forteau, or any of those places at which the trading steamer had touched. "It is too bad," he continued, "for I did hope to dis-

pose of our cargo somewhere along here. If we could do that we might be home again inside of ten days. Now, if we have to go far to the northward, it may be two or three weeks longer before we again sight Blomidon."

"I am sorry for your sake," replied Cabot, "though I would just as soon spend a month up here as not. I only wish we could land somewhere along here, for I am curious to see what kind of a country Labrador is."

This wish was gratified late that afternoon, when the fog lifted in time to disclose the fine harbour of Red Bay, into which, White said, they would run, so as to spend the night quietly at anchor, with both watches turned in at once.

At Red Bay, therefore, Cabot had his first taste of life in Labrador. The shores looked so green and attractive that he wondered why the only settlement in sight—a collection of a dozen huts and fish houses, should be located on a rocky islet, bare and verdureless. He asked White, who only laughed, and said he'd find out soon enough by experience.

After they had come to anchor and lowered the sails, White got an empty water cask into the dinghy, saying that first of all they must go about a mile to a trout stream at the head of the bay for some fresh water.

"Trout stream!" cried Cabot. "How I wish

I had my fishing tackle. Trout for supper would be fine."

"There are other things equally important with tackle for trout fishing in this country," remarked White.

"What, for instance?"

"You'll know inside of half an hour," was the significant reply.

So they rowed up the bay, Cabot filled with curiosity and White chuckling with anticipation. The further they went the more was Cabot charmed with the beauty of the scene and the more desirous did he become to ramble over the green slopes on which, as White assured him, delicious berries of several varieties were plentiful. At length they opened a charming valley, through which wound and tumbled a sparkling brook thickly bordered by alders and birches. At one side were several substantial log cabins, but as they were evidently uninhabited Cabot began to undress, declaring that he must have a bath in that tempting water.

"Better keep your shirt on until we have filled the cask," advised White, at the same time stepping overboard in the shallows at the mouth of the stream without removing any of his clothing. They pulled the boat up until it grounded, and then White began hurriedly to fill the water barrel, while Cabot waded a short distance up

stream to see if he could discover any trout. All at once he stopped, looked bewildered, and then started back on a run. At the same time he slapped vigorously at his bare legs, brushed his face, waved his arms, and uttered exclamations of frantic dismay. The air about him had been suddenly blackened by an incredible swarm of insects that issued in dense clouds from the low growth bordering the stream, and attacked the unfortunate youth with the fury of starvation.

"What's the matter?" inquired White innocently, as his companion rushed past him towards the open.

"Matter!" retorted the other. "I'm on fire with the bites of these infernal things, and we want to get out of here in a hurry or they'll sting us to death."

"Oh, pshaw!" laughed White, though he also was suffering greatly. "You've only struck a few ordinary Labrador mosquitoes and black flies."

"Mosquitoes and black flies!" cried Cabot. "Hornets and red-hot coals, you'd better say. How can you stand them? Your skin must be thicker than sole leather."

"I can't very well," admitted White, "but this cask has got to be filled, and the sooner we do it the quicker we can get away. Break off a couple of leafy branches to fight with and then

keep 'em off both of us as well as you can. It will only take a few minutes longer."

In spite of their efforts at self-defence, faces, hands, and Cabot's bare legs were covered with blood before their task was completed, and they were once more in the boat pulling furiously for the wind-swept water of the open bay.

"I never expected to find mosquitoes this far north," said Cabot, as the pests began to disappear before the freshening breeze and the rowers paused for breath.

"Strangers are apt to be unpleasantly surprised by them," replied White, "but they are here all the same, and they extend as far north as any white man has ever been. I have been told that they are as bad in Greenland as here, and I expect they flourish at the North Pole itself. They certainly are the curse of Labrador, and until ice makes in the fall they effectually prevent all travel into the interior. Even the Indians have to come to the coast in summer to escape them, while the whites who visit this country for the fishing make their settlements on the barest and most wind-swept places. The few who live here the year round have summer homes on the coast, but build their winter houses inland, at the heads of bays or the mouths of rivers, where there is timber to afford some protection from the cold. Those are winter houses back there."

"I wondered why they were abandoned," said Cabot, "but I don't any longer."

"By the way," suggested White, "you forgot to try the trout fishing. Shall we go back?"

"I wouldn't go fishing on that stream if every trout in it was of solid gold and I could scoop them out with my hands," asserted Cabot. "In fact, I don't know of anything short of starvation, or dying of thirst, that would take me back there."

After supper our lads went ashore at the island settlement, and were hospitably received by the dwellers in its half-dozen stoutly built, earthen-roofed houses. These were constructed of logs, set on end like palisades, and while they were scantily furnished, they were warm and comfortable. In them Cabot, who was regarded with great curiosity on account of having come from the far foreign city of New York, asked many questions, and acquired much information concerning the strange country to which Fate had brought him. Thus he learned that Labrador is a province of Newfoundland, and that while its prolific fisheries attract some 20,000 people to its bleak shores every summer, its entire resident white population hardly exceeds one thousand souls. He was told that from June to October news of the outside world is received by steamer from St. Johns every two or three

weeks, but that during the other eight months of the year only three mails reach the country, coming by dog sledge from far-away Quebec.

While Cabot was gathering these and many other interesting bits of information, White was becoming confirmed in his belief that to make a successful trading trip he must carry his goods far to the northward.

So at daybreak of the following morning the "Sea Bee" was once more got under way, and ran up the rock-bound coast past Chateau Bay, with its superb Castle Rock, to Battle Harbour, the metropolis of Labrador, which place was reached late the same evening.

At this point, which is at the eastern end of the Belle Isle Strait, is a resident population of some two hundred souls, a hospital, a church, a schoolhouse, and a prosperous mercantile establishment. Here our lads found a large steamer loading with dried fish for Gibraltar, and here Cabot became greatly interested in the rose-tinted quartz that forms so striking a feature of Labrador scenery.

At Battle Harbour they were still advised to push farther on, and so, bidding farewell to this outpost of civilisation, the "Sea Bee" again spread her dusky wings and set forth for the mission stations of the far North, where it was hoped a profitable market might be found.

CHAPTER XVII.

IMPRISONED BY AN ICEBERG.

THE brief northern summer was nearly ended. Its days were growing short and chill, its nights long and cold. The month of October was well advanced, and flurries of snow heralded the approach of winter. Most of the Labrador fishing fleet had already sailed away, and the few boats still left were preparing for a speedy departure. The last steamer of the season had come and gone, and the few permanent residents of the country were moving back from the coast into winter quarters. Great flocks of geese streamed southward, and with harsh cries gave warning of the icy terrors that had driven them from their Arctic nesting places. Night after night the wonderful beauties of the aurora borealis were flashed across the northern heavens with ever increasing brilliancy. Every one predicted a hard winter, and everything pointed to its early coming.

Nearly two months had elapsed since the little schooner "Sea Bee," manned by a couple of

plucky lads, sailed out of Battle Harbour on a trading venture to the northern missions, and from that day no tidings had been received concerning her. The few who remembered her, occasionally speculated as to what success she had met and why she had not put in an appearance on her return voyage, but generally dismissed the subject by saying that she must have been in too great a hurry to get south, as any one having a chance to leave that forsaken country naturally would be. But the "Sea Bee" had not gone to the southward, nor was there any likelihood of her doing so for many long months to come.

On one of the mildest of these October days, when the sunshine still held a trace of its summer warmth, a solitary figure stood on the crest of a bald headland, some hundreds of miles to the north of Battle Harbour, gazing wistfully out over the lead-coloured waters that came leaping and snarling towards the red rocks far beneath him. He had on great sea boots that stood sadly in need of mending, and was clad in heavy woollens, faded and worn, that showed many a rent and patch. As he leaned on the stout staff that had assisted him in climbing, his figure seemed bent as though by age, but when he lifted his face, tanned brown by long exposure, the downy moustache on his upper lip proclaimed his youth.

Altogether the change in his appearance was so great that his most intimate friend would hardly have recognised in him the youth who had been called the best dressed man in the T. I. class of '99 a few months earlier. But the voice with which he finally broke the silence of his long reverie was unmistakably that of Cabot Grant.

"Heigh ho!" he sighed, as he cast a sweeping glance over the widespread waste of waters on which nothing floated save a few belated icebergs, and then inland over weary miles of desolate upland barrens, treeless, moss-covered, and painfully rugged. "It is tough luck to be shut up here like birds in a cage, with no chance of the door being opened before next summer. It is tougher on Baldwin, though, than on me, and if he can stand it I guess I can. But I suppose I might as well be getting back or he will be worrying about me."

Thus saying, Cabot picked up a canvas bag that lay at his feet and moved slowly away.

A very serious misfortune had befallen our lads, and for more than a month the "Sea Bee," though still afloat and as sound as ever, had been unable to move from the position she now occupied. After leaving Battle Harbour her voyage to the northward had not been more than ordinarily eventful, though subject to many and irritating delays. Not only had there been adverse

A SOLITARY FIGURE STOOD ON THE CREST OF A BALD HEADLAND.

winds, but she had twice been stormbound for days in harbours to which she had run for shelter. Then, too, White had insisted on stopping at every settlement that promised a chance for trading, and had even run fifty miles up Hamilton Inlet with the hope of finding customers for his goods at the half-breed village of Rigoulette. But he had always been disappointed. Either his goods were not in demand, or those who desired them had nothing to offer in exchange but fish, which he did not care to take. And always he was told of a scarcity of food still farther north. So the voyage had been continued in that direction along a coast that ever grew wilder, grander, and more inhospitable.

In the meantime Cabot was delighted at the opportunities thus given him for getting acquainted with the country, and made short exploring trips from every port at which they touched. From some of these he came back sadly bitten by the insect pests of the interior, and from others he brought quantities of blueberries, pigeon berries that looked and tasted like wild cranberries, or yellow, raspberry-like "bake apples," resembling the salmon berries of Alaska. Also he picked up numerous rock and mineral specimens that he afterwards carefully labelled.

Finally, when they had passed the last fishing

station of which they had any knowledge, and had only the missions to look forward to, they were overtaken, while far out at sea, by a furious gale that sorely buffeted them for twenty-four hours, and, in spite of their strenuous efforts, drove them towards the coast. The gale was accompanied by stinging sleet and blinding snow squalls, and at length blew with such violence that they could no longer show the smallest patch of canvas.

In this emergency White constructed a sea anchor, by means of which he hoped to prolong their struggle for at least a few hours. It was hardly got overboard, however, before a giant surge snapped its cable and hurled the little craft helplessly towards the crash and smother with which the furious seas warred against an iron coast.

In addition to the other perils surrounding our lads, the gloom of impending night was upon them, and they could only dimly distinguish the towering cliffs against which they expected shortly to be dashed. Both of them stood by the tiller, grimly silent, and using the last of their strength to keep their craft head on, for in the trough of that awful sea she would have rolled over like a log. Neither of them flinched nor showed a sign of fear, though both fully realised the fate awaiting them.

At last, with the send of a giant billow, the little schooner was flung bodily into the roaring whiteness, and, with hearts that seemed already to have ceased their beating, the poor lads braced themselves for the final shock. To their unbounded amazement the "Sea Bee," instead of dashing against the cliffs, appeared to pass directly into them as though they were but shadows of a solid substance, and in another minute had shot, like an arrow from a bow, through a rift barely wide enough to afford her passage.

As her stupefied crew slowly realised that a reprieve from death had been granted at the last moment, they also became aware that they were in a place of absolute darkness, and, save for the muffled outside roar of furious seas, of absolute quiet. At the same time they were so exhausted after their recent prolonged struggle that they found barely strength to get overboard an anchor. Then, careless of everything else, they tumbled into their bunks for the rest and sleep they so sadly needed.

When they next awoke it was broad daylight, and their first move was to hasten on deck for a view of their surroundings. Their craft lay as motionless as a painted ship, in the middle of a placid pool black as a highland tarn. In no place was it more than a pistol shot in width, and it was enclosed by precipitous cliffs that tow-

ered hundreds of feet above her. The schooner could not have been more happily located by one possessed of an absolute knowledge of the coast under the most favourable conditions, and that she should have come there as she had was nothing short of a miracle.

Filled with thankfulness for their marvellous escape the lads gazed about them curious to discover by what means they had gained this haven of refuge. On three sides they could see only the grim fronts of inaccessible cliffs. On the fourth was a strip of beach and a cleft through which poured a plume-like waterfall white as a wreath of driven snow.

"Did we come in that way?" asked Cabot, pointing to this torrent of silver spray.

"I suppose we must have," rejoined White soberly; "for I can't see any other opening, and it certainly felt last night as though we were sailing over the brink of a dozen waterfalls. But let's get breakfast, for I'm as hungry as a wolf. Then there'll be time enough to find out how we got in here, as well as how we are to get out again."

After a hearty meal they got the dinghy overboard and started on a tour of exploration. First they visited the beach and found a rude pathway leading up beside the waterfall that promised exit from the basin to an active climber.

"In spite of all the wonderful happenings of last night I don't believe we came in that way," said Cabot.

"No," laughed White, "the old 'Bee's' wings aren't quite strong enough for that yet, though there's no saying what she may do with practice."

Satisfied that there was no outlet for a sailing craft in this direction, they pulled towards the opposite side of the basin, but not until they were within a few rods of its cliffs did they discover an opening which was so black with shadow that it had heretofore escaped their notice.

"Here it is," cried Cabot, "though——"

His speech was cut suddenly short, and for a moment he stared in silent amazement. The farther end of the passage was completely filled by what appeared a gigantic mass of white rock.

"An iceberg!" exclaimed the young skipper, who was the first to recognise the true nature of the obstacle. "An iceberg driven in by the gale and jammed. Now we are in a fix."

"I should say as much," responded Cabot, "for there isn't space enough to let a rowboat out, much less a schooner. No wonder this water is as still as that in a corked bottle. What shall we do now?"

"Wait until it melts, I suppose," replied

White gloomily, "or until the outside seas batter it away."

So our lads had waited unhappily and impatiently for more than a month, and still the ice barrier was as immovable as ever. Also, as the weather was growing steadily cooler, its melting became less and less with each succeeding day.

During this period of enforced imprisonment they had made several exploring trips into the interior, but had failed to find trace of human life; nor were they able to go far either north or south on account of impassable waterways. Neither could they discover any timber from which to obtain firewood, and as the supply on the schooner was nearly exhausted their outlook for the future grew daily more and more gloomy.

For a while they had hoped to signal some passing vessel, and one or the other of them made daily trips to the most prominent headland of the vicinity, where he kept a lookout for hours. But this also proved fruitless, for but two vessels had been sighted, and neither of these paid any attention to their signals.

Thus the open season passed, and with the near approach of an Arctic winter the situation of our imprisoned lads grew so desperate that they were filled with the gloomiest forebodings.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH THE NATIVES.

ONLY once during their tedious imprisonment had our lads received evidence that human beings existed in that desolate country, and after they gained this information they hardly knew whether to rejoice or to regret that it had come to them. One morning, some weeks after their arrival in the basin, to which they had given the name of "Locked Harbour," Cabot, going on deck for a breath of air, made a discovery so startling that, for a moment, he could hardly credit the evidence of his eyes. Then he shouted to White:

"Come up here quick, old man, and take in the sight."

As the latter, who had been lighting a fire in the galley stove, obeyed this call, Cabot pointed to the beach, on which stood a row of human figures, gazing at the schooner as stolidly as so many graven images.

"Indians!" cried White, "and perhaps we

can get them to show us the way to the nearest mission."

"Good enough!" rejoined Cabot in high excitement. "Let's go ashore and interview them before they have a chance to disappear as mysteriously as they have appeared. Where do you suppose they came from?"

"Can't imagine, and doubt if they'll ever tell. Probably they are wondering the same thing about us. I suppose, though, they are on their way towards the interior for the winter. But hold on a minute. We must take them some sort of a present. Grub is what they'll be most likely to appreciate, for the natives of this country are always hungry."

Acting upon his own suggestion, White dived below, to reappear a minute later with a bag of biscuit and a generous piece of salt pork, which he tossed into the dinghy. Then the excited lads pulled for the beach on which the strangers still waited in motionless expectation.

"Only a woman, a baby, and three children," remarked White, in a tone of disappointment, as they approached near enough to scrutinise the group. "Still, I suppose they can guide us out of here as well as any one else if they only will."

The strangers were as White had discovered—a woman and children, but one of these latter was a half-grown boy of such villainous appear-

ance that Cabot promptly named him "Arsenic," because his looks were enough to poison anything. They were clad in rags, and were so miserably thin that they had evidently been on short rations for a long time. White's belief that they were hungry was borne out by the ravenous manner with which they fell upon the provisions he presented to them.

Arsenic seized the piece of pork and whipping out a knife cut it into strips, which he, his mother, and his sisters devoured raw, as though it were a delicacy to which they had long been strangers. The hard biscuit also made a magical disappearance, and when all were gone, Arsenic, looking up with a hideous grin, uttered the single word: "More."

"Good!" cried Cabot, "he can talk English. Now look here, young man, if we give you more —all you can carry, in fact, of pork, bread, flour, tea, and sugar, will you show us the road to the nearest mission—Ramah, Nain, or Hopedale?"

"Tea, shug," replied the boy, with an expectant grin.

"Yes, tea, sugar, and a lot of other things if you'll show us the way to Nain. You understand?"

"Tea, shug," repeated the young Indian, again grinning.

"We wantee git topside Nain. You sabe, Nain?" asked Cabot, pointing to his companion and himself, and then waving his hand comprehensively at the inland landscape.

"Tea, shug, more," answered the young savage, promptly, while his relatives regarded him admiringly as one who had mastered the art of conversing with foreigners.

"Perhaps he understands English better, or rather more, than he speaks it," suggested White.

"It is to be hoped that he does," replied Cabot. "Even then he might not comprehend more than one word in a thousand. But I tell you what. Let's go and get our own breakfast, pack up what stuff we intend to carry, make the schooner as snug as possible, and come back to the beach. Here we'll show these beggars what stuff we've brought, and give them to understand that it shall all be theirs when they get us to Nain. Then we'll start them up the trail, and follow wherever they lead. They are bound to fetch up somewhere. Even if they don't take us where we want to go, we will have provisions enough to last us a week or more, and can surely find our way back."

"I hate to leave them, for they might skip out while we were gone," objected White.

"That's so. Well then, why not invite them on board? They'll be safe there until we are

ready to go. Say, Arsenic, you all come with we all to shipee, sabe? Get tea, sugar, plenty, eat heap, you understand?"

As Cabot said this he made motions for all the natives to enter the dinghy, and then pointed to the schooner.

It was evident that he was understood, and equally so that the woman declined his proposition, for she sat motionless, holding her baby, and with the younger children close by her side. The boy, however, expressed his willingness to visit the schooner by entering the dinghy and seating himself in its stern.

"That will do," said White. "The others won't run away without him, and he is the only one we want anyhow."

So the boat was rowed out to the anchored schooner, while those left on the beach watched the departure of their son and brother with the same apathy that they had shown towards all the other happenings of that eventful morning.

"Look at the young scarecrow, taking things as coolly as though he had always been used to having white men row him about a harbour," laughed Cabot, "and yet I don't suppose he was ever in a regular boat before."

"No," agreed White, "I don't suppose he ever was."

They did not allow Arsenic to enter the "Sea

Bee's " cabin, but made him stay on deck, where, however, he appeared perfectly contented and at his ease. Here Cabot brought the various supplies for their proposed journey and put them up in neat packages while White prepared breakfast. The former had supposed that their guest would be greatly interested in what he was doing, but the young savage manifested the utmost indifference to all that took place. In fact he seemed to pay no attention to Cabot's movements, but squatted on the deck, and gazed in silent meditation at the beach, where his mother and sisters could be seen also seated in motionless expectation.

" I believe he is a perfect idiot," muttered Cabot, " and wonder that he knows enough to eat when he's hungry."

Then White called him, and he went below to breakfast.

" Do you think it is safe to leave that chap alone on deck with all those things? " asked the former.

" Take a look at him and see for yourself," replied Cabot.

So White crept noiselessly up the companion ladder and peeped cautiously out. Arsenic still squatted where Cabot had left him, gazing idiotically off into space. At the same time a close observer might have imagined that his beady

eyes twinkled with a gleam of interest as White's head appeared above the companion coaming.

"I guess it is all right," said White, rejoining his friend.

"Of course it is. He couldn't swim ashore with the things, and there isn't any other way he could make off with them, except by taking them in the dinghy, and that chump couldn't any more manage a boat than a cow."

In spite of this assertion Cabot finished his meal with all speed, and then hurried on deck, where he uttered a cry of dismay. A single glance showed him that their guest, together with all the supplies prepared for their journey, was no longer where he had left him. A second glance disclosed the dinghy half way to the beach, while in her stern, sculling her swiftly along with practised hand, stood the wooden-headed young savage who didn't know how to manage a boat.

"Come back here, you sneak thief, or I'll fill you full of lead," yelled Cabot, and as the Indian paid not the slightest attention he drew his revolver and fired. He never knew where the bullet struck, but it certainly did not reach the mark he intended, for Arsenic merely increased the speed of his boat without even looking back.

So angry that he hardly realised what he was doing, Cabot cocked his pistol and attempted to

fire again, but the lock only snapped harmlessly, and there was no report. Then he remembered that he had expended several shots the day before in a fruitless effort to attract attention on board a distant vessel seen from the lookout, and had neglected to reload.

As he started for the cabin in quest of more cartridges he came into collision with White hurrying on deck.

"What is the matter?" inquired the latter, as soon as he regained the breath thus knocked out of him.

"Oh, nothing at all," replied Cabot, with ironical calmness, "only we've been played for a couple of hayseeds by a wooden-faced young heathen who don't know enough to go in when it rains. In his childish folly he has gone off with the dinghy, taking our provisions along as a souvenir of his visit, and he didn't even have the politeness to look round when I spoke to him. Oh! but it will be a chilly day for little Willy if I catch him again."

"I am glad you only spoke," remarked White. "When I heard you shoot I didn't know but what you had murdered him."

"Wish I had," growled Cabot, savagely. "Look at him now, and consider the cheek of the plain, every-day North American savage."

It was aggravating to see the young thief gain

the beach and lift from the boat the provisions he had so deftly acquired. It was even more annoying to see the embryo warrior's grateful family pounce upon the prizes of his bow and spear, and to be forced to listen to the joyous cries with which they greeted their returned hero. Filled now with a bustling activity, the Indians quickly divided the spoil according to their strength; and then, without one backward glance, or a single look towards the schooner, they started up the narrow trail by the waterfall, with the triumphant Arsenic heading the procession, and in another minute had disappeared.

As the last fluttering rag vanished from sight, our lads, who had watched the latter part of this performance in silent wrath, turned to each other and burst out laughing.

"It was a dirty, mean, low-down trick!" cried Cabot. "At the same time he played it with a dexterity that compels my admiration. Now, what shall we do?"

"I suppose one of us will have to swim ashore and get that boat."

"What, through ice water? You are right, though, and as I am the biggest chump, I'll go."

Cabot was as good as his word, and did swim to the beach, though, as he afterwards said, he did not know whether his first plunge was made

into ice water or molten lead. Then he and White followed the trail of their recent guests to the crest of the bluffs, but could not discover what direction they had taken from that point. So they returned to the schooner sadder but wiser than before, and wondered whether they were better or worse off on account of the recent visitation.

"If they carry news of us to one of the missions we will be better off," argued Cabot.

"But, if they don't, we are worse off, by at least the value of our stolen provisions," replied White.

CHAPTER XIX.

A MELANCHOLY SITUATION.

In Labrador, under ordinary circumstances, the loss of such a quantity of provisions as Arsenic had carried away would have been a very serious misfortune. But food was the one thing our lads had in abundance, and they were more unhappy at having lost a guide, who might have shown them a way out of their prison, than over the theft he had so successfully accomplished.

"The next time we catch an Indian we'll tie a string to him," said Cabot.

"Yes," agreed White, "and it will be a stout one, too; but I am afraid there won't be any more Indians on the coast this season."

"How about Eskimo?"

"Some of them may come along later, when the snowshoeing and sledging get good enough, for they are apt to travel pretty far south during the winter. Still, there's no knowing how far back from the coast their line of travel may lie at this point, and dozens of them might pass without our knowledge."

"Couldn't we go up or down the coast as well as an Eskimo, whenever these miserable waterways freeze over?" asked Cabot.

"Of course, if we had sledges, dogs, snowshoes, and fur clothing," replied White; "but without all these things we might just as well commit suicide before starting."

"Well, I'll tell you what we can do right off, and the sooner we set about it the better. We can go inland as far as possible, and leave a line of flags or some sort of signals that will attract attention to this place."

"I don't know but what that is a good idea," remarked White, thoughtfully. "At any rate, it would be better than doing nothing, and if we don't get help in some way we shall certainly freeze to death in this place long before the winter is over."

So Cabot's suggestion was adopted, and the remainder of that day was spent in preparing little flags of red and white cloth, attaching them to slender sticks, and in making a number of wooden arrows. On a smooth side of these they wrote:

"Help! We are stranded on the coast."

"I wish we could write it in Eskimo and Indian," said Cabot, "for English doesn't seem to be the popular language of this country."

"The flags and arrows will be a plain enough

language for any natives who may run across them," responded White, "and I only hope they'll see them; but it is a slim chance, and we'll probably be frozen stiff long before any one finds us."

"Oh, I don't know," said Cabot, cheerfully. "There's firewood enough in the schooner itself to last quite a while."

"Burn the 'Sea Bee'!" cried White, aghast at the suggestion. "I couldn't do it."

"Neither could I at present; but I expect both of us could and would, long before our blood reached the freezing point."

"But if we destroyed the schooner, how would we get out of here next summer?"

"I'm sure I don't know, and don't care to try and think yet a while. Just now I am much more interested in the nearby winter than in a very distant summer."

The next day, and for a number of days thereafter, our lads worked at the establishment of their signal line. They erected stone cairns at such distances apart that every one was visible from those on either side, and on the summit of each they planted a flag with its accompanying pointer. In this way they ran an unbroken range of signals for ten miles, and would have carried it further had they dared expend any more of their precious firewood.

While they were engaged upon this task the weather became noticeably colder, the mercury falling below the freezing point each night, and the whole country was wrapped in the first folds of the snow blanket under which it would sleep for months. About the time their signal line was completed, however, there came a milder day, so suggestive of the vanished summer that Cabot declared his intention of spending an hour or so at the lookout. "There might be such a thing as a belated vessel," he argued, "and I might have the luck to signal it. Anyhow, I am going to make one more try before agreeing to settle down here for the winter."

As White was busy moving the galley stove into the cabin, and making other preparations for their coming struggle against Arctic cold, Cabot rowed himself ashore and left the dinghy on the beach. Then he climbed to the summit of the lofty headland, where, for a long time, he leaned thoughtfully on the rude Alpine-stock that had aided his steps, and gazed out over the vacant ocean.

While Cabot thus watched for ships that failed to come, White was putting the finishing touches to his new cabin fixtures. He was just beginning to wonder if it were not time for his comrade's return when he felt the slight jar of some floating object striking against the side of the

schooner. Thinking that Cabot had arrived, he shouted a cheery greeting, but turned to survey the general effect of what he had done before going on deck. The next minute some one softly entered the cabin and sprang upon the unsuspecting youth, overpowering him and flinging him to the floor before he had a chance to offer resistance. Here he was securely bound and left to make what he could of the situation, while his captors swarmed through the schooner with exclamations of delight at the richness of their prize.

As White slowly recovered from the bewilderment of his situation he saw that his assailants were Indians, and even recognised in one of them the hideous features of the lad whom Cabot had named Arsenic.

"What fools we have been," he thought, bitterly. "We might have known that he would come back with the first band of his friends that he ran across. And to make sure that they would find us we filled the country with sign posts all pointing this way. Seems to me that was about as idiotic a thing as we could have done, and if ever a misfortune was deserved this one is. I wonder what has become of Cabot, and if they have caught him yet. I only hope he won't try to fight 'em, for they'd just as soon kill him as not. Probably they'll kill us both,

though, so that no witnesses can ever appear against them. Poor chap! It was a sad day for him when he attempted to help a fellow as unlucky as I am out of his troubles. Now I wonder what's up."

A shrill cry of triumph had come from the shore, and the savages on the schooner's deck were replying to it with exultant yells.

The cry from shore announced the capture of Cabot by two Indians who had been left behind for that express purpose. Of course the newcomers had known as soon as they discovered the dinghy that at least one of the schooner's defenders was on shore, and had made their arrangements accordingly. As we have seen, the naval contingent experienced no difficulty in capturing the schooner, and a little later the land forces carried out their part of the programme with equal facility. They merely hid themselves behind some boulders, and leaping out upon the young American, as he came unsuspectingly swinging down the trail, overpowered him before he could make a struggle. Tying him beyond a possibility of escape, they carried him down to the beach, where they uttered the cries that informed their comrades of their triumph.

Until this time the schooner had been left at her anchorage, for fear lest any change in her position might arouse Cabot's suspicions. Now

that they were free to do as they pleased with her the Indians cut her cable, and, after much awkward effort, succeeded in towing her to the beach, where they made her fast.

As the darkness and cold of night were now upon them, and as they had no longer any use for the dinghy, they smashed it in pieces and started a fire with its shattered timbers. At the same time they broke out several barrels of provisions, and the entire band, gathering about the fire, began to feast upon their contents.

In the meantime Cabot and White, in their respective places of captivity, were equally miserable through their ignorance of what had happened to each other, and of the fate awaiting them. Of course Cabot had seen the schooner brought to the beach, while White, still lying on her cabin floor, was able to guess at her position from such sounds as came to his ears.

During that eventful afternoon, while the savages were still preparing the plan that had resulted in such complete success, a white man, setting a line of traps for fur-bearing animals, had run across the outermost of the signals established by our lads a few days earlier. Its fluttering pennon had attracted his attention while he was still at a distance, and, filled with curiosity, he had gone to it for a closer examination. On reaching the signal he read the pencilled writ-

ing on its arrow, and then stood irresolute, evidently much perturbed, for several minutes. Finally, heaving a great sigh, he set forth in the direction indicated by the arrow.

He was a gigantic man, and presented a strange spectacle as he strode swiftly across the country with the long, sliding gait of a practised snowshoer. Although his wide-set blue eyes were frank and gentle in expression, a heavy mass of blonde hair, streaming over his shoulders like a mane, and a shaggy beard, gave him an air of lion-like ferocity. This wildness of aspect, as well as his huge proportions, were both increased by his garments, which were entirely of wolf skins. Even his cap was of this material, ornamented by a wolf's tail that streamed out behind and adorned in front with a pair of wolf ears pricked sharply forward. He carried a rifle and bore on his shoulders, as though it were a feather weight, a pack of such size than an ordinarily strong man would have found difficulty in lifting it.

As this remarkable stranger, looking more like a Norse war god than a mere human being, reached one signal after another, he passed it without pausing for examination until he had gained a point about half way to the coast. Then he came to an abrupt halt and studied the surrounding snow intently. He had run across the

trail made by Arsenic and his fellows a few hours earlier. After an examination of the sprawling footprints, the big man uttered a peculiar snort of satisfaction, and again pushed on with increased speed. An hour later he stood, concealed by darkness, on the verge of the cliffs enclosing Locked Harbour, gazing interestedly down on the fire-lit beach, the half-revealed schooner, the feasting savages, and the recumbent, dimly discerned figure of Cabot Grant, their prisoner.

CHAPTER XX.

COMING OF THE MAN-WOLF.

ONCE Arsenic went to where Cabot was lying, and, grinning cheerfully, remarked: "Tea, shug. Plenty, yes." Then he laughed immoderately, as did several other Indians who were listening admiringly to this flight of eloquence in the white man's own tongue.

"Oh, clear out, you grinning baboon," growled Cabot. "I only hope I'll live to get even with you for this day's work."

The Indians were evidently so pleased at having drawn a retort from their prisoner that he declined to gratify them further, or to speak another word, though for some time Arsenic continued to beguile him with his tiresome "Tea, shug," etc. When the latter finally gave it up and started away to get his share of the feast, Cabot's gaze followed him closely.

All this time our lad was filled with vague terrors concerning White, of whose fate he had not received the slightest intimation, as well as of what might be in store for himself. Would he

be carried to the distant interior to become a slave in some filthy Indian village, or would he be killed before they took their departure? Perhaps they would simply leave him there to freeze and starve to death, or they might amuse themselves by burning him at the stake. Did these far northern Indians still do such things? He wondered, but could not remember ever to have heard.

While considering these unpleasant possibilities, Cabot was also suffering with cold, from the pain of his bonds, and from lying motionless on the bed of rocks to which he had been carelessly flung. But, with all his pain and his mental distress, he still glared at the young savage who had so basely betrayed his kindness, and at length Arsenic seemed to be uneasily aware of the steady gaze. He changed his position several times, and his noisy hilarity was gradually succeeded by a sullen silence. Suddenly he lifted his head and listened apprehensively. His quick ear had caught an ominous note in the distant, long-drawn howl of a wolf. He spoke of it to his comrades, and several of them joined him in listening. It came again, a blood-curdling yell, now so distinct that all heard it. They stopped their feasting to consult in low tones and peer fearfully into the surrounding blackness.

Cabot had also recognised the sound, but, un-

canny as it was, he wondered why the howl of a wolf should disturb a lot of Indians who must know, even better than he, the cowardly nature of the beast, and that there was no chance of his coming near a fire.

Even as these thoughts passed through his mind, the terrible cry was uttered again—this time so close at hand that it was taken up and repeated by a chorus of echoes from the nearby cliffs. The Indians sprang to their feet in terror, while at the same moment an avalanche of stones, gravel, and small boulders rushed down the face of the cliff close to where Cabot lay. From it was evolved a monstrous shape that, with unearthly howlings, leaped towards the frightened natives. As it did so flashes of lightning, that seemed to dart from it, gleamed with a dazzling radiance on their distorted faces. In another moment they were in full flight up the rugged pathway leading from the basin, hotly pursued by their mysterious enemy.

The latter seemed to pass directly through the fire, scattering its blazing brands to all sides. At the same time he snatched up a flaming timber for use as a weapon against such of the panic-stricken savages as still remained within reach.

The flashes of light that accompanied the apparition, while illuminating all nearby objects, had left it shrouded in darkness, and only when

it crouched for an instant above the fire did Cabot gain a clear glimpse of the gigantic form. To his dismay it appeared to be a great beast with a human resemblance. It had the gleaming teeth, the horrid jaws, the sharp ears, in fact the face and head of a wolf, the tawny mane of a lion, and was covered with thick fur; but it stood erect and used its arms like a man. At the same time, the sounds issuing from its throat seemed a combination of incoherent human cries and wolfish howlings. Cabot only saw it for a moment, and then it was gone, leaping up the pathway, whirling the blazing timber above its head, and darting its mysterious lightning flashes after the flying Indians.

As the clamour of flight and pursuit died away, to be followed by a profound silence, there came a muffled call:

"Cabot. Cabot Grant."

"Hello!" shouted our lad. "Who is it? Where are you?"

"It is I, White," came the barely heard answer. "I am here in the cabin. Can't you come and let me out?"

"No," replied Cabot. "I am tied hand and foot."

"So am I. Are you wounded?"

"No. Are you?"

"No. What are the Indians doing?"

"Running for dear life from a Labrador devil —half wolf and half man—armed with soundless thunder-bolts."

During the short silence that followed, White meditated upon this extraordinary statement, and decided that his comrade's brain must be affected by his sufferings.

"If I could only twist out of these ropes," he groaned, and then he began again a struggle to free his hands from their bonds. At the same time Cabot, who had long since discovered the futility of such effort, was anxiously listening, and wondering what would happen next.

With all his listening he did not hear the soft approach of furred footsteps, and when a blinding light was flashed full in his face he was so startled that he cried out with terror. Instantly the light vanished, and he shuddered as he realised that the furry monster had returned, and, bending over him, was fumbling at his bonds.

In another moment these were severed, he was picked up as though he had been an infant, and carried to the fire, whose scattered embers were speedily re-assembled. As it blazed up, Cabot gazed eagerly at the mysterious figure, which had thus far worked in silence. Curious as he was to see it, he yet dreaded to look upon its wolfish features. Therefore, as the fire blazed

up, he uttered a cry of amazement, for, fully revealed by its light, was a man; clad in furs, it is true, but bare-headed and having a pleasant face lighted by kindly blue eyes.

"You are really human after all!" gasped Cabot.

The stranger smiled but said nothing.

"And can understand English?"

A nod of the head was the only answer.

"Then," continued Cabot, hardly noting that his deliverer had not spoken, "won't you please go aboard the schooner and find my friend? He is in the cabin, where those wretches left him, tied up."

This was the first intimation the stranger had received that any one besides Cabot needed his assistance, but without a word he did as requested, swinging himself aboard the "Sea Bee" by her head chains and her bowsprit, which overhung the beach. Directly afterwards a flash of light streamed from the cabin windows. Then White Baldwin, assisted by the fur-clad giant, emerged from his prison, walked stiffly along the deck, and was helped down to the beach, where Cabot eagerly awaited him.

After a joyous greeting of his friend the young American said anxiously: "But are you sure you are all right, old man—not wounded nor hurt in any way?"

"No; I am sound as a nut," replied White. "Only a little stiff, that's all."

"Same here," declared Cabot, industriously rubbing his legs to restore their circulation. "I was rapidly turning into a human icicle, though, when our big friend dropped down from the sky in a chariot of flame and gave those Indian beggars such a scare that I don't suppose they've stopped running yet. But how did you happen to let 'em aboard, old man? Couldn't you stand them off with a gun?"

For answer White gave a full account of all that had taken place, so far as he knew, and in return Cabot described his own exciting experiences, while the stranger listened attentively, but in silence, to both narratives. When Cabot came to the end of his own story, he said:

"Now, sir, won't you please tell us how you happened to find us out and come to our rescue just in the nick of time? I should also very much like to know how you managed to tumble down that precipice unharmed, as well as how you produced those flashes of light that scared the savages so badly—me too, for that matter."

For answer the stranger only smiled gravely, pointed to his lips, and shook his head.

"Oh!" exclaimed both Cabot and White, shocked by this intimation, and the former said:

"I beg your pardon, sir. While I noticed that

you didn't do much talking, it never occurred to me that you were dumb. I am awfully sorry, and it must be a terrible trial. At the same time, I am glad you can hear me say how very grateful we are to you for getting us out of a nasty fix in the splendid way you did. Now, I move we adjourn to the cabin of the schooner, where we can make some hot tea and be rather more comfortable than out here. That is, if you think those Indians won't come back."

The stranger smiled again, and shook his head so reassuringly that the lads had no longer a doubt as to the expediency of returning to the cabin. There they started a fire in the stove, boiled water, made tea, and prepared a meal, of which the stranger ate so heartily, and with such evident appreciation, that it was a pleasure to watch him.

While supper was being made ready, the big man removed his outer garments of wolf fur and stood in a close-fitting suit of tanned buckskin that clearly revealed the symmetry of his massive proportions.

"If I were as strong as you look, and, as I know from experience, you are," exclaimed Cabot, admiringly, "I don't think I would hesitate to attack a whole tribe of Indians single handed. My! but it must be fine to be so strong."

After supper Cabot, who generally acted as

spokesman, again addressed himself to their guest, saying:

"If you don't mind, sir, we'd like to have you know just what sort of a predicament we've got into, and ask your advice as to how we can get out of it." With this preamble Cabot explained the whole situation, and ended by saying:

"Now you know just how we are fixed, and if you can guide us to the nearest Mission Station —or, if you haven't time to go with us, if you will give us directions how to find it—we shall be under a greater obligation to you than ever."

For a minute the stranger looked thoughtful but made no sign. Then, dipping his finger in a bowl of water, he wrote on the table the single word: "To-morrow." Having thus dismissed the subject for the present, he stretched his huge frame on a transom and almost instantly fell asleep.

Our tired lads were not long in following his example, and, though several times during the night one or the other of them got up to replenish the fire, they always found their guest quietly sleeping. But when they both awoke late the following morning and looked for him he had disappeared.

CHAPTER XXI.

A WELCOME MISSIONARY.

ALTHOUGH the outer garments of wolf fur belonging to the mysterious stranger were also missing, our lads were not at first at all uneasy concerning his absence, but imagined that their guest had merely gone for a breath of fresh air or to examine the situation of the schooner by daylight. So they mended the fire and got breakfast ready, expecting with each moment that he would return. As he did not, Cabot finally went on deck to look for him.

The morning was bitterly cold, and the harbour was covered with ice sufficiently strong to bear a man.

"The old 'Bee's' found her winter berth at last," reflected Cabot, as he glanced about him, shivering in the keen air.

To his disappointment he could discover no trace of the man upon whom they were depending to aid their escape from this icy prison. Cabot even dropped to the beach and made his way to the crest of the inland bluffs, but could

see no living thing on all the vast expanse of snow outspread before him.

"I guess he has gone, all right," muttered the lad, "and we are again left to our own resources, only a little worse off than we were before. Why he came and helped us out at all, though, is a mystery to me."

With this he retraced his steps and conveyed the unwelcome news to White.

"It is evident then," said the latter, "that we must stay here, alive or dead, all winter. And I expect we'll be a great deal more dead than alive long before it is over."

"Oh, I don't know," replied Cabot. "This doesn't seem to be such a very uninhabited place, after all. I'm sure we've had a regular job lot of visitors during the past week, and a good many of them, too. So I don't see why we shouldn't have other callers before the winter is over. When the next one comes, though, we'll take care and not let him out of our sight. Why didn't you tie a string to one of those Indians, as I advised?"

"Because they tied me first," answered White, laughing in spite of his anxiety. "Why didn't you do it yourself?"

"Because all the tying apparatus was aboard the schooner, and I hadn't so much as a shoestring about me. I wish I could have tied that

scoundrel Arsenic, though. If ever I meet him again I'll try to teach him a lesson in gratitude. But what do you propose to do to-day, skipper?"

"I suppose we might as well unbend and stow our canvas, since the 'Bee' 'll not want to use sails again for a while. We might also send down topmasts, stow away what we can of the running rigging, get those provisions on the beach aboard again, and——"

"Hold on!" cried Cabot, "you've already laid out all the work I care to tackle in one day, and if you want any more done you'll have to ship a new crew."

It was well that the lads had ample occupation for that day, otherwise they would have been very unhappy. Even Cabot, for all his assumed cheerfulness, realised the many dangers with which they were beset. He believed that their unknown friend had deserted them, and that the Indians might return at any moment in overpowering numbers. He knew that without outside assistance and guidance it would be impossible to traverse the vast frozen wilderness lying between them and civilisation. He knew also that if he and White remained where they were they must surely perish before the winter was over. So the prospect was far from cheerful, and that evening the "Sea Bee's" crew, wearied

with their hard day's work, ate their supper in thoughtful silence.

While they were thus engaged both suddenly sprang to their feet with startled faces. A gun had been fired from close at hand, and with its report came a confusion of shouts. Evidently more visitors had arrived; but were they friends or foes?

White thought the latter, and snatched up a loaded revolver, declaring that the Indians should not again get posession of his schooner without fighting for it; but Cabot believed the new-comers to be friends.

"If they were enemies," he argued, "they would have got aboard and taken us by surprise before making a sound." So saying he hurried up the companionway, with White close at his heels.

"Hello!" shouted Cabot. "Who are you?"

"We are friends," answered a voice from the beach in English, but with a strong German accent. "Can you show us a light?"

"Of course we can, and will in a moment," replied Cabot joyously. "White, get a——"

But White had already darted back into the cabin for a lantern, with which he speedily emerged, and led the way to the beach. Here our lads found a dog sledge with its team, and an Eskimo driver, who was already collecting wood

for a fire, together with a white man, tall, straight, middle-aged, and wearing a long beard streaked with grey.

"God be with you and keep you," he said, as he shook hands with Cabot and White. "Where is the captain of this schooner?"

Cabot pointed to his companion.

"Where then is the crew?"

At this both lads laughed, and Cabot replied: "I am the crew."

"You don't mean to tell me that you two boys navigated that vessel to this place unaided."

"We certainly did, sir, though we have not done much navigating for more than a month now. But will you please tell us who you are, where you came from, and how you happened to discover us? Though we are not surprised at being discovered, for we seem to be located on a highway of travel and have visitors nearly every day."

"Indeed," replied the stranger; "and yet you are stranded in one of the least known and most inaccessible bays of the coast. It is rarely visited even by natives, and I doubt if any white man was ever here before your arrival."

"Then how did you happen to come?" asked Cabot.

"I came by special request to find you and offer whatever assistance I may render. I am

the Rev. Ostrander Mellins, Director of a Moravian Mission Station located on the coast some twenty-five miles from this point."

"But how did you know of us?" cried Cabot, in amazement. "We haven't sent any telegrams nor even written any letters since coming here."

"Did not you send a messenger yesterday?"

"No, sir. Most of yesterday we were prisoners in the hands of some rascally Indians."

"I perceive," said the missionary, "that I have much to hear as well as to tell, and, being both tired and cold, would suggest that we seek a more sheltered spot than this, where we may converse while my man prepares supper."

At these words both our lads were covered with confusion, and, with profuse apologies for their lack of hospitality, besought the missionary to accompany them into the schooner's cabin.

"We should have asked you long ago," declared White, "only we were so overcome with joy at meeting a white man who could talk to us that we really didn't know what we were about."

"Won't your man and dogs also come aboard?" asked Cabot, anxious to show how hospitable they really were.

"No, thank you," laughed the missionary. "They will do very well where they are."

In the cabin, which had never seemed more

cheerful and comfortable, the lads helped the new-comer remove his fur garments, plied him with hot tea, together with everything they could think of in the way of eatables, and at the same time told him their story as they had told it to their other guest of the night before.

"And you did not send me any message?" he asked, with a quizzical smile.

"I know!" cried Cabot. "It was the man-wolf. But where did you meet him, and why didn't he come back with you? How did he manage to explain the situation? We thought he couldn't talk."

"I don't know that he can," replied the missionary, "for I have never heard him speak, nor do I know any one who has. Neither did I meet him. In fact I have never seen him, but I think your messenger must be one and the same with your man-wolf, since he signed his note 'Homo-lupus.'"

"His note," repeated Cabot curiously. "Did he send you a note?"

"Not exactly; but he left one for me at a place near the station, where he has often left furs to be exchanged for goods, and called my attention to it by a signal of rifle shots. When I reached the place I was not surprised to find him gone, for he always disappears when it is certain that his signal has been understood. I was, however,

greatly surprised to find, instead of the usual bundle of furs, only a slip of paper supported by a cleft stick. On it was written:

"'Schooner laden with provisions stranded in pocket next South of Nukavik Arm. Crew in distress. Need immediate assistance. Homolupus.'

"With such a message to urge me, I made instant preparation, and came here with all speed."

"It was awfully good of you," said White.

"Perhaps not quite so good as you may think, since our annual supply ship having thus far failed to make her appearance, the mission is very short of provisions, and the intimation that there was an abundance within reach relieved me of a load of anxiety. So if you are disposed to sell——"

"Excuse me for interrupting," broke in Cabot, "but, before you get to talking business, please tell us something more about the man who sent you to our relief. Who is he? Where does he live? What does he look like? Why does he disappear when you go in answer to his signals? Why do you call him a wolf-man? What——"

"Seems to me that is about as many questions as I can remember at one time," said the missionary, smiling at Cabot's eagerness, "and I am sorry that, with my slight knowledge of the subject, I cannot answer them satisfactorily. The

man-wolf was well known to this country before I came to it, which was three years ago, and dwells somewhere to the southward of this place, though no one, to my knowledge, has ever seen his habitation. Some of the Eskimo can point out its location, but they are in such terror of him that they give it a wide berth whenever travelling in that direction. As I said, I have never seen him, nor have I ever known of his holding communication other than by writing with any human being. The natives describe him as a man of great size with the head of a wolf."

"There! I was sure it wasn't imagination," interrupted Cabot excitedly. "When I first saw him his head and face were those of a wolf, but the next time they were those of a man, and so I thought I must have dreamed the wolf part. I wonder how he manages it, and I wish I knew how he produces those lightning flashes. If this were a more civilised part of the world I should say that they resulted from electricity—but of course that couldn't be away off here in the wilderness. I asked him about them but got no answer."

"Have you, then, seen and spoken with him?" asked the missionary.

"Of course we have seen him, for he spent last night in this very cabin, and we have spoken to him, though not with him, for he is dumb."

"I envy you the privilege of having met him, and am greatly relieved to learn that he is so wholly human; for the natives regard him as either a god or a devil, I can't tell which, and ascribe to him superhuman powers. He has righted many a wrong, punished many an evil-doer, saved many a poor soul from starvation, and performed innumerable deeds of kindness. He dares everything and seems able to do anything. He is at once the guardian angel and the terror of this region, and, on the whole, I doubt if there is in all the world to-day a more remarkable being than the man-wolf of Labrador."

CHAPTER XXII.

GOOD-BYE TO THE "SEA BEE."

WHITE BALDWIN was of course interested in this talk of the man-wolf, but he was, at the same time, anxious to hear what the new-comer had to say concerning the cargo of provisions for which he had so long sought a purchaser. His heart beat high with the hope of a speedy return to his home and its loved ones; for he had already planned to leave the "Sea Bee" where she was until the following season. In case he could dispose of her cargo, he would insist that transportation and a guide—at least as far as Indian Harbour—should form part of the bargain. From Indian Harbour they would surely find some way of continuing the journey. He might even reach home by Christmas! Wouldn't it be great if he could, and if, at the same time, he could carry with him enough money to relieve all present anxieties? Perhaps he might even be able to take his mother and Cola to St. Johns for a long visit. Of course Cabot would accompany them, for with the warships all gone south for the winter there would be no danger of arrest,

and then he would find out what a splendid city the capital of Newfoundland really was. Oh! if they could only start at once; but of course there were certain preliminaries to be settled first, and the sooner they got at them the better.

Thus thinking, White took advantage of a pause in the conversation to remark: "What a very fortunate thing it is that you who want to purchase provisions and we who have them for sale should come together in this remarkable fashion."

"It is so fortunate and so remarkable that I must regard it as a distinct leading of the Divine Providence that knows our every need and guides our halting footsteps," replied the missionary.

"And do you think," continued the young trader anxiously, "that you want our entire cargo?"

"I am sure of it; and even then we may be put on short rations before the winter is ended, for there are many to be fed."

With this opening the conversation drifted so easily into business details that, before the occupants of the cabin turned in for the night, everything had been arranged. White had been somewhat disappointed when the missionary said that, having no funds in St. Johns, he would be obliged to give a sight draft on New York in

payment for the goods. This slight annoyance was, however, speedily smoothed away by Cabot, who offered to cash the draft immediately upon their arrival in St. Johns, where, he said, he had ample funds for the purpose. It was also agreed that our lads should be provided with fur clothing, snowshoes, a dog sledge, and a guide as far as Indian Harbour. In addition to taking the cargo of the "Sea Bee," the missionary proposed to purchase the schooner itself, at a sum much less than her real value, but one that constituted a very fair offer under the circumstances.

White hesitated over this proposition, but finally accepted it upon condition that at any time during the following summer he should be allowed to buy the schooner back at the same price he now received for her.

"Isn't it fine," he whispered to Cabot, after all hands had sought their bunks, "to think that our venture has turned out so splendidly after all?"

"Fine is no name for it," rejoined the other. "But I do hope we will have the chance of meeting Mr. Homolupus once more and of thanking him for what he has done. We owe so much to him that, man-wolf or no man-wolf, I consider him a splendid fellow."

In spite of their impatience to start southwards, our lads were still compelled to spend two weeks longer at Locked Harbour. First the mis-

sionary was obliged to make a visit to his station, and, on his return, the snow was not in condition for a long sledge journey. Furious winds had piled it into drifts, with intervening spaces of bare ground, over which sledge travel would be impossible. So they must wait until the autumnal storms were over and winter had settled down in earnest. But, impatient as they were, time no longer hung heavily on their hands, nor did they now regard their place of abode as a prison. Its solitude and dreariness had fled before the advent of half a hundred Eskimo—short, squarely built men, moon-faced women, and roly-poly children, looking like animated balls of fur, all of whom had been brought from the mission to form a settlement on the beach. It was easier to bring them to the Heaven-sent provisions that were to keep them until spring than it would have been to transport the heavy barrels of flour and pork to the mission. At the same time, they could protect the schooner from depredations by other wandering natives.

So they came, bag and baggage, babies, dogs, and all, and at once set to work constructing snug habitations, in which, with plenty of food and plenty of seal oil, they could live happily and comfortably during the long winter months. These structures were neither large nor elegant. In fact they were only hovels sunk half under-

ground, with low stone walls, supporting roofs of whale ribs, covered thick with earth. A little later they would be buried beneath warm, shapeless mounds of snow. To most of them outside light and air could only be admitted through the low doorways, but one, more pretentious than the others, was provided with an old window sash, in which the place of missing panes was filled by dried intestines tightly stretched. In every hovel a stone lamp filled with seal oil burned night and day, furnishing light, warmth, and the heat for melting ice into drinking water, boiling tea, drying wet mittens, and doing the family cooking.

Cabot and White were immensely interested in watching the construction of these primitive Labrador homes. They were also amazed at the readiness with which the natives made themselves snugly safe and comfortable, in a place where they had despaired of keeping alive. Besides watching the Eskimo prepare for the winter and picking up many words of their language, Cabot took daily lessons in snowshoeing and the management of dog teams, in both of which arts White was already an adept.

According to contract, both lads had been provided with complete outfits for Arctic travel, including fur clothing, boots, and sleeping bags. A sledge with a fine team of dogs had also been

placed at their disposal, and an intelligent young Eskimo, who could speak some English, was ready to guide them on their southward journey. He was introduced to his future travelling companions as Ildlat-Netschillik, whereupon Cabot remarked:

"That is an elegant name for special occasions, such as might occur once or twice in a lifetime, but seems to me something less ornamental, like 'Jim,' for instance, would be better for everyday use. I wonder if he would mind being called Jim?"

On being asked this question the young Eskimo, grinning broadly, said:

"A' yite. Yim plenty goot," and afterwards he always answered promptly and cheerfully to the name of "Yim."

At length snow fell for several days almost without intermission. Then a fierce wind took it in hand, kneading it, packing it, and stuffing it into every crack and cranny of the landscape until hollows were filled, ridges were nicely rounded, and rocks had disappeared. In the meantime, strong white bridges had been thrown across lake and stream, and the great Labrador highway for winter travel was formally opened to the public.

November was well advanced, and our lads had been prisoners in Locked Harbour for more

"YIM."

than two months when this way of escape was opened to them. It had been decided that they should take a single large sledge, having broad runners, and a double team of dogs—ten in all. On this, therefore, was finally lashed a great load of provisions, frozen walrus meat for dog food, sleeping bags, the three all-important cooking utensils of the wilderness—kettle, fry-pan, and teapot—an axe, and Cabot's bag of specimens. With this outfit Yim was to conduct them over the first half of their 400-mile journey, or to Indian Harbour, where, through a letter from the missionary, they expected to procure a fresh team, renew their supply of provisions, and obtain another guide, who should go with them to Battle Harbour.

When the time for starting arrived, the entire population of the new settlement turned out to see them off and help get their heavily laden sledge up the steep ascent from the beach. At the crest of the bluffs the men fired a parting salute from their smooth-bore guns, the women and children uttered shrill cries of farewell, and the missionary gave them his final blessing, Yim cracked his eighteen-foot whiplash like a pistol shot, shouted to his dogs, and the yelping team sprang forward. Our lads gave a fond backward glance at their loved schooner, so far below them that she looked like a toy boat, and then,

with hearts too full for words, they faced the vast white wilderness outspread like a frozen sea before them.

All that day they pushed steadily forward almost without a pause, holding a westerly course to pass around a deep fiord that penetrated far inland, and might not yet be crossed with safety. Yim ran beside his straining dogs, encouraging the laggards with whip and voice; White led the way and broke the trail, while Cabot brought up the rear and helped the sledge over difficult places.

For several hours they followed the signal line with its fluttering flags, and felt that they were still on familiar ground. At length even these were left behind, and for three hours longer they plodded sturdily forward, guided only by Yim's unerring instinct. Then the short day came to an end and night descended with a chill breath of bitter winds. Cabot was nearly exhausted, and even White was painfully weary, but both had been buoyed up by a hope that they might reach timber and have abundant firewood for their first camp. Now, when Yim, throwing down his whip and giving his dogs the command to halt, calmly announced that they would make camp where they were, both lads looked at him in dismay.

"We surely can't camp here in the snow with-

out a fire or any kind of shelter!" exclaimed Cabot. "Why, man, we'll be frozen stiff long before morning."

"A' yite. Me fix um. You see," responded Yim, cheerfully.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE COMFORT OF AN ESKIMO LAMP.

In that dreary waste of snow, unrelieved so far as the eye could reach by so much as a single bush, the making of a camp that should contain even the rudiments of comfort seemed as hopeless to White, who had always been accustomed to a timbered country, as it did to Cabot, who knew nothing of real camp life, and had only played at camping in the Adirondacks. Left to their own devices, they would have passed a most uncomfortable if not a perilous night, for the mercury stood at many degrees below zero. But they had Yim with them, and he, being perfectly at home amid all that desolation, was determined to enjoy all the home comforts it could be made to yield.

First he marked out a circular space some twelve feet in diameter, from which he bade his companions excavate the snow with their snow-shoes, and throw it out on the windward side. While they were doing this he went a short distance away, and, from a mass of closely com-

pacted snow, carved out with his knife a number of blocks, as large as could be handled without breaking, to each of which he gave a slight curve. With time enough Yim could have constructed from such slabs a perfect igloo or snow hut, but the fading daylight was very precious, and he did not consider that the cold was yet sufficiently severe to demand a complete enclosure. So he merely built a low, hood-like structure on the windward side of the space the others had cleared. One side of this was still further extended by the sledge, relieved of its load and set on edge.

The precious provisions were placed inside the rude shelter, the sleeping bags covered its floor, and, when all was completed, Yim surveyed his work with great satisfaction.

"It is pretty good so far as it goes," admitted White, dubiously, "but I don't see how we are to get along without at least enough fire to boil a pot of tea, and of course we can't have a fire without wood."

"That's so," agreed Cabot, shivering.

Yim only smiled knowingly as he groped among the miscellaneous articles piled at the back of the hut. From them he finally drew forth a shallow soapstone bowl having one straight side about six inches long. It was shaped something like a clam shell, and was a

specimen of the world-famed Eskimo cooking lamp. He also produced a bladder full of seal oil.

"Good enough!" cried Cabot. "Yim has remembered to bring along his travelling cook stove."

Setting the lamp in the most sheltered corner of the hut, Yim filled it with oil, and then, drawing forth a pouch that hung from his neck, he produced a wick made of sphagnum moss previously dried, rolled, and oiled. This he laid carefully along the straight side of the lamp. Then, turning to Cabot, he uttered the single word: "Metches."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the young engineer, "I forgot to bring any. But of course you must have some, White."

"No, I haven't. Matches were among the things you were to look after, and so I never gave them a thought."

The spirits of the lads, raised to a high pitch of expectation by the sight of Yim's lamp, suddenly sank to zero with the discovery that they had no means for lighting it. Yim, however, only smiled at their dismay. Of course he had long since learned the use of matches, and to appreciate them at their full value; but he also knew how to produce fire without their aid in the simplest manner ever devised by primitive man.

It is the friction method of rubbing wood against wood, and, in one form or another, is used all over the world. It was known to the most ancient Egyptians, and is practised to-day by natives of the Amazon valley, dwellers on South Pacific islands, inhabitants of Polar regions, Indians of North America, and the negroes of Central Africa. These widely scattered peoples use various models of wooden drills, ploughs, or saws. But Yim's method is the simplest of all. When he saw that no matches were forthcoming, he said:

"A' yite. Me fix um." At the same time he produced two pieces of soft wood from some hiding place in his garments. One of these, known as the "spindle," was a stick about two feet long by three-quarters of an inch in diameter and having a rounded point. The other, called the "hearth," was flat, about eighteen inches in length, half an inch thick, and three inches wide. On its upper surface, close to one edge, were several slight cavities, each just large enough to hold the rounded end of the spindle, and from each was cut a narrow slot down the side of the hearth. This slot is an indispensable feature, and without it all efforts to produce fire by wood-friction must fail.

Laying the hearth on the flat side of a sledge runner and kneeling on it to hold it firmly in

position, Yim set the rounded end of his spindle in one of its depressions, and holding the upper end between the palms of his hands, began to twirl it rapidly, at the same time exerting all possible downward pressure. As his hands moved towards the lower end of the spindle he dexterously shifted them back to the top, without lifting it or allowing air to get under its lower end.

With the continuation of the twirling process a tiny stream of wood meal, ground off by friction, poured through the slot at the side of the hearth, and accumulated in a little pile, that all at once began to smoke. In two seconds more it was a glowing coal of fire. Then Yim dropped his spindle, covered the coal with a bit of tinder previously made ready, and blew it into a flame, which he deftly transferred to the wick of his lamp.

At sight of the first spiral of smoke our lads had been filled with amazement. As the coal began to glow they uttered exclamations of delight, and when the actual flame appeared they broke into such enthusiastic cheering as set all the dogs to barking in sympathy.

"It is one of the most wonderful things I ever saw," cried Cabot. "I've often read of fire being produced by wood friction, and I have tried it lots of times myself, but as I never could

raise even a smoke, and never before met any one who could, I decided that it was all a fake got up by story writers."

"I was rather doubtful about it myself," admitted White. "But, I say! Isn't that a great lamp, and doesn't it make things look cheery?"

White's approval of "Yim's cook stove," as Cabot called it, was well merited, for its five inches of blazing wick yielded as much light and twice the heat of a first-class kerosene lamp. Over it Yim had already suspended a kettle full of snow, and now he laid a slab of frozen pork close beside it to be thawed out.

While waiting for these he fed the dogs, who had been watching him with wistful eyes and impatient yelpings. To each he threw a two-pound chunk of frozen walrus meat, and each devoured his portion with such ravenous rapidity that Cabot declared they swallowed them whole.

Half an hour after the lamp was lighted it had converted enough snow into boiling water to provide three steaming cups of tea, and while our lads sipped at these Yim cut slices of thawed pork, laid them in the fry-pan, and holding this over his lamp soon had them sizzling and browning in the most appetising manner. This, with tea and ship biscuit, constituted their supper.

When Yim no longer needed his lamp for

cooking he removed two-thirds of its wick and allowed the flame thus reduced to burn all night. Over it hung a kettle of melting snow, and above this, on a snowshoe, supported by two others, wet mittens and moccasins were slowly but thoroughly dried.

In spite of the hot tea, their fur-lined sleeping bags, and the effective wind-break behind which they were huddled, our lads suffered with cold long before the night was over, and were quite willing to make a start when Yim, after a glance at the stars, announced that daylight was only three hours away. For breakfast they had more scalding tea and a quantity of hard bread, broken into small bits, soaked in warm water, fried in seal oil, and eaten with sugar. White pronounced this fine, but Cabot only ate it under protest, because, as he said, he must fill up with something.

The travel of that day, with its accompaniments of blisters and strained muscles, was much harder than that of the day before, and our weary lads were thankful when, towards its close, they entered a belt of timber that had been in sight for hours.

That night they slept warmly and soundly on luxurious beds of spruce boughs beside a great fire frequently replenished by Yim.

"I tell you what," said Cabot, as, early in the

evening, he basked in the heat of this blaze, "there's nothing in all this world so good as that. For my part I consider fire to be the greatest blessing ever conferred upon mankind."

"How about light, air, water, food, and sleep?" asked White.

"Those are necessaries, but fire is a luxury. Not only that, but it is the first of all luxuries and the one upon which nearly all others depend."

When, a little later, Cabot lay so close to the blaze that his sleeping bag caught on fire, and he burned his hands in putting it out, White laughingly asked:

"What do you think of your luxury now?"

"I think," was the reply, "that it proves itself the greatest of luxuries by punishing over-indulgence in it with the greatest amount of pain."

"Umph!" remarked Yim, who was listening, "Big fire, goot. Baby fire, more goot. Innuit yamp mos' goot of any."

"Oh, pshaw!" retorted Cabot, "your sooty little lamp isn't in it with a blaze like that."

On the third day of their journey the party had skirted the edge of the timber for several hours, when all at once Yim held his head high with dilated nostrils. At the same time it was noticed that the dogs were also sniffing eagerly.

"What is it, Yim?"

"Fire. Injin fire," was the reply.

"I'd like to know how you can tell an Indian fire from any other," said Cabot. "Especially when it is so far away that I can't smell anything but cold air."

But Yim was right, for, after a while, his companions also smelled smoke, and a little later the yelping of their dogs was answered by shrill cries from within the timber. Suddenly two tattered scarecrows of children emerged from the thick growth, stared for an instant, and then, with terrified expressions, darted back like frightened rabbits.

"The Arsenic kids!" cried Cabot, who had recognised them. "Now I'll catch that scoundrel." As he spoke he sprang after the children, and was instantly lost to view in the low timber.

"Hold on!" shouted White. "You'll run into an ambush."

But Cabot, crashing through the undergrowth, failed to hear the warning, and with the loyalty of true friendship White started after him. A minute later he overtook his impulsive comrade standing still and gazing irresolute at a canvas tent, black with age and smoke, and patched in many places. It stood on the edge of a small lake, and showed no sign of occupancy save a slender curl of smoke that drifted from a vent hole in its apex.

"Get behind cover," cried White. "They may take a pot shot at any moment."

"I don't believe it," replied Cabot. "Any way, I'm bound to see what's inside."

Thus saying he stepped forward and lifted the dingy flap.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OBJECTS OF CHARITY.

WHILE Cabot felt very bitter against the young Indian whom he had named "Arsenic," on account of the base ingratitude with which the latter had repaid the kindness shown him, and was determined to punish him for it in some way, he had not the slightest idea what form the punishment would take. Of course he did not intend to kill Arsenic, nor even to severely injure him, but he had thought of giving the rascal a sound thrashing, and only hoped he could make him understand what it was for. In the excitement of the past two weeks he had forgotten all about Arsenic, but the sight of those ragged children had awakened his animosity, and he had followed them, hoping that they would lead him to the object of his just wrath. It was only when he reached the sorry-looking tent that he remembered the other savages whom Arsenic had brought with him on his second visit to the schooner, and wondered if some of them might

not be concealed behind the canvas screen ready to spring upon him.

With this thought he stepped nimbly to one side as he threw open the flap, and stood for a moment waiting for what might happen. There was no rush of men and no sound, save only a faint cry of terror, hearing which Cabot peered cautiously around the edge of the opening.

A poor little fire of sticks smouldered on the ground in the middle, filling the place with a pungent smoke. Through this Cabot could at first make out only a confused huddle at one side, from which several pairs of eyes glared at him like those of wild beasts. As he entered the tent a human figure detached itself from this and strove to rise, but fell back weakly helpless. In another moment a closer view disclosed to Cabot the whole dreadful situation. The huddle resolved itself into a woman, hollow-cheeked and gaunt with sickness and hunger, two children in slightly better plight, and a little dead baby. There was no other person in the tent, and it contained no furnishing except the heap of boughs, rags, and scraps of fur that passed for a bed, and a broken kettle that lay beside the fire. On the floor were scattered a few bones picked clean, from which even the marrow had been extracted; but otherwise there was no vestige of food.

"I believe they are starving to death!" cried Cabot, as he made these discoveries.

"It certainly looks like it," replied White, who had followed his friend into the tent. "I wonder what they did with all the provisions they stole from us."

"Probably they were taken from them in turn to feed those other Indians. At any rate, they are destitute enough now, and we can't leave them here to die. Go and bring Yim with the sled as quick as you can, while I wake up this fire."

"All right," replied White, "only I'm afraid he won't come."

"He must come," said Cabot decisively.

The hatred between Eskimo and Indian is so bitter that it took all White's powers of persuasion, together with certain threats, to bring Yim to the tent, but once there even he was sufficiently roused by its spectacle of suffering to bestir himself most actively.

During the next hour, while the starving, half-frozen Indians were warmed and fed, the rescuers discussed the situation and what should be done. They could not leave the helpless family as they had found them, neither could they carry them away, and it would be folly to remain with them longer than was absolutely necessary. They could not gain a word of information from

the woman or children as to how they had arrived at such a pitiable plight, what they had done with the stolen provisions, why their friends had abandoned them, or what had become of Arsenic.

"I'll tell you what," said Cabot at length; "we'll provide them with a supply of wood and leave all the provisions we can possibly spare. Then we will hurry on to Indian Harbour, send back some more provisions from there by Yim, and get him to report the case to Mr. Mellins."

As there seemed nothing better to be done, this plan was carried out, though dividing the provisions made each portion look woefully small, and by noon the sledge was again on its way southward.

The head of the fiord having been reached, the trail now left the sheltering timber and struck across an open country, which was also extremely rugged, abounding in hills and hollows. Over these the sledge pulled heavily, in spite of its lightened load, because one of the ice shoes, with which its runners were shod, had broken and could not be repaired until camp was made.

When they had gone about three miles, and while our lads were still talking of the suffering they had so recently witnessed, they were attracted by an exclamation from Yim, who was pointing eagerly ahead. Looking in that direc-

tion, they saw a line of dark objects, that had just topped a distant ridge, running swiftly towards them.

"Caribou!" shouted White, in great excitement, at the same time seizing his rifle from the sledge and hastily removing it from its sealskin case. In another minute sledge and dogs were concealed in a bit of a gully, with Cabot to watch them, while Yim and White, lying flat behind the crest of a low ridge, were eagerly noting the course of the approaching animals. When it became evident that they would pass at some distance on the right, White, crouching low, ran in that direction.

The caribou appeared badly frightened, pausing every few moments to face about and cast terrified glances over the way they had come. All at once, during one of these pauses, a shot rang out, followed quickly by another, and, as the terrified animals dashed madly away in a new direction, one of their number dropped behind, staggered, and fell.

"I've got him! I've got him!" yelled White, wild with the joy of his achievement.

"Hurrah for us!" shouted Cabot. "Steaks and spare-ribs for supper to-night."

"Yip, yip, yip!" screamed Yim to his dogs, and with a jubilant chorus of yells and yelpings, the entire outfit streamed over the ridge to the

place where the unfortunate caribou lay motionless.

In his broken English Yim gave the lads to understand that it would be advisable to camp where they were, in order to prepare their meat for transportation, and also to mend their broken sledge shoe. This latter, he explained, could be done much better with a mixture of blood and snow than with any other available material. He furthermore intimated that he feared they might be overtaken by a blizzard before morning, in which case they could best defy it in a regularly built igloo.

All these reasons for delay seemed so good that the others accepted them, and the work outlined by Yim was immediately begun. In cutting up the caribou, as in building the snow hut, Cabot, from lack of experience, could give but slight assistance, and, realising this, he made a proposal.

"Look here," he said. "The wood we have brought along won't last long and I want a good fire to-night. I also want to carry some of this meat to those poor wretches we have just left. We have got more than we can take with us, anyhow. So I am going back with a leg of venison, and on my return I'll bring all the wood I can pack."

"But you might lose the way," objected White.

"No one could lose so plain a trail as the one we have just made," replied Cabot, scornfully.

"Suppose it should be dark before you got back?"

"There will be three hours of daylight yet, and I won't be gone more than two at the most. Anyhow, I must get some of this meat to those starving children."

White's protests were ineffectual before Cabot's strong resolve, and, as soon as a forequarter of the caribou could be made ready, the latter set forth on his errand of mercy. Although he had no difficulty in finding the trail, it was so much harder to walk with a heavy load than it had been without one that a full hour had passed before he again came within sight of the lonely tent in the forest.

One of the children who was outside spied him and announced his coming, so that when he entered the tent he again found a frightened group huddled together and apprehensively awaiting him. But they were stronger now, and the children uttered little squeals of joy at sight of the meat he had brought, while even the haggard face of their mother was lighted by a fleeting smile.

For the pleasure of seeing the children eat Cabot toasted a few strips of venison over the coals, and these smelled so good that he cut off

some more for himself. In this occupation he spent another hour without realising the flight of time, and had eaten a quantity of meat that he would have deemed impossible had it all been placed before him at once.

As he was bending over the fire toasting a strip that he said to himself should be the last, a slight cry from one of the children caused him to look up. He barely caught a glimpse of a face at the entrance as it was hastily withdrawn, but in that moment he recognised the features of Arsenic. At sight of the ill-favoured young Indian all of Cabot's former resentment flamed up, and springing to his feet he dashed from the tent, determined to give Arsenic the thrashing he deserved.

Of course Cabot had removed his snowshoes, but, as the young Indian had done the same thing, both were compelled to readjust these all-important articles, without which they would have floundered helplessly in the deep snow.

Arsenic was off first, and though Cabot chased him hotly he could not overcome the advantage thus gained. Being also much less expert in the management of snowshoes, he tripped several times, and finally pitched headlong. When he next regained his feet Arsenic had disappeared in the timber, and our lad realised the futility of a further pursuit. Now, too, he noticed that the

sky had become heavily overcast, and that a strong wind was soughing ominously through the tree tops.

"It must be later than I thought," he reflected, "and high time for me to be getting back to camp." With this he hastily gathered a bundle of sticks to be used as firewood and started, as he supposed, towards the open; but so confused was he, and so many turns did he make, that more than half an hour was wasted before he finally emerged from the timber. Here he was dismayed to find that snow was falling, or rather being driven in straight lines by the wind, which had increased to the force of a gale.

"I've got to hump myself to reach camp before dark, but I'll make it all right," he remarked to himself, as he set forth across the white plain.

He took a diagonal course that he hoped would lead him to the trail, but by the time all landmarks were obliterated by the descending night he had failed to find it. In looking back he could not even distinguish the timber line from which he had come. Then the awful conviction slowly forced itself upon him that he was lost in a trackless wilderness, swept by the first fury of an Arctic blizzard.

CHAPTER XXV.

LOST IN A BLIZZARD.

So numbed was our poor lad by the shock of his discovery that, for a few moments, he stood motionless. Of course it would be of no use to continue his hopeless struggle. Even if he had come in the right direction he must ere this have passed the place where his companions were encamped. If he could only regain the timber there might be a slight chance of surviving the night; but even its location was lost to him, and a certain death stared him in the face. At any rate it would be a painless ending, for he had only to lie down to be quickly covered by a soft blanket of snow. Then he could go to sleep never again to waken. He was very weary, and already so drowsy that the thought of sleep was pleasant to him. Such a death would certainly not be so terrible as drowning after a hopeless struggle with black waters.

With this thought every incident of that awful night after the loss of the "Lavinia" flashed into his mind. How utterly hopeless had seemed

his situation then and how desperately he had fought for his life. But he had fought, and had won the fight. What was the use of learning a lesson of that kind if he could not profit by it? Was not his life as well worth fighting for now as then? Of course it was; nor was his present position any more hopeless than that one had been. Then he had drifted with the wind, and now he would do the same thing. If he could hold out long enough he would fetch up somewhere sometime. It was merely a question of endurance. Even in that howling wilderness, with death on all sides, there were still three chances for life. The drift with the wind might take him to the igloo that Yim must have built ere this. How bright, and warm, and cosey its lamplighted interior would be. How glad they would be to see him, and how he would laugh at all his recent fears. But of course there was not one chance in a million of his finding the igloo. It was not at all unlikely, though, that the drift might take him to a belt of timber, into which the bitter wind could not penetrate, and where he could crawl under the thick, low-hanging branches of some tent-like spruce. Even such a shelter now seemed very desirable, and would be accepted with thankfulness. If he failed to reach timber, the wind might blow him to some region of cliffs and rocks that would shel-

ter him from its cutting blasts. If he missed all these chances, and if worse came to worst, he could always go to sleep beneath the snow blanket, and it would be better to do that with the consciousness of having made a good fight than to yield now like a coward.

All these thoughts flashed through Cabot's mind within the space of a minute, and, having determined to fight until the battle was either won or lost, he flung away his now useless burden of firewood and started off down the wind. Tramping through that newly fallen snow, even with the support of racquets, was exhausting work, but the effort at least kept him warm, and, before he came to the end of his strength, some hours later, he had covered a number of miles. He had also come to the least promising of the three places he had hoped for, and found himself in a region of cliffs, precipices, and huge rocks, among which he could no longer make headway, even though he had not reached the limit of endurance.

But he had reached that limit, and now only sought a spot in which he might lie down and go to sleep. Of course the snow would quickly cover him, and doubtless he would be buried deep ere the fury of the storm was past. But he had a vague plan for putting his snowshoes over his head like an inverted V, and hoped in that way

to be kept from smothering. At the same time he had little thought that he should ever see the light of another day.

"Only a bit further and then I can rest," he muttered, as he pushed into the blackness of a rift between two tall cliffs, and experienced a partial relief from the furious wind. It seemed as though he ought to penetrate this as far as possible, and so he struggled weakly forward. Then he stumbled over something that lay across his path and fell heavily. As he lay wondering whether an attempt to regain his feet would be worth while, he seemed to hear the distant but strenuous ringing of an electric bell, and almost smiled at the absurdity of such a fancy in such a place. The thought carried him back to the electrical laboratory of the Institute, and he began to dream that he was still a student of ohms, volts, and amperes.

In another moment his consciousness would have been wholly merged in dreams, but suddenly the place where he lay was filled with a blaze of light that apparently streamed from the solid rock on either side. So intense was this light that it penetrated even Cabot's closed eyes, and aroused him from the stupor into which he had fallen. He lifted his head, and, still bewildered, wondered why the laboratory was so brilliantly illuminated.

Then, through the glare, he saw the driving snow-flakes with their dancing shadows magnified a hundred fold, and, all at once, he remembered. Staggering to his feet, and groping with outstretched arms, he pushed forward along the narrow pathway outlined by the mysterious light. He no longer heard the sound of bells, but in its place came strains of music that blended weirdly with the shrieking wind, and irresistibly compelled him forward. The pathway sloped downward and then took a sharp turn. As Cabot passed this the light behind him was extinguished as suddenly as it had appeared, the wild music sounded louder than ever, and directly in front of him gleamed two squares of light like windows. Between them was a dark space, towards which he instinctively stumbled. It proved to be as he had hoped, a door massive and without any means of unclosing that his blind fumblings could discover. So he beat against it feebly and uttered a hoarse cry for help. In another moment it was opened, and Cabot, leaning heavily against it, fell into a room, small, warm, and brightly lighted.

For a few minutes he lay with closed eyes, barely conscious that his struggle for life had been successful, and that in some mysterious manner he had gained a place of safety. Gradually he became aware that some one was bending

over him, and opening his eyes he gazed full into a face that he instantly recognised, though it had sadly changed since he last saw it. At that time it had expressed strength in every line, but now it was haggard and worn by suffering.

"The Man-wolf!" gasped Cabot, in a voice hardly above a whisper.

A slight smile flitted across the man's face, and then, without warning, he sank to the floor in a dead faint. His mighty strength had been turned to the weakness of water, and the iron will had at length relaxed its hold upon the enfeebled body. As the man-wolf fell, a stream of blood trickled from his mouth, and he choked for breath as though strangling.

There is nothing so effective in restoring spent strength as a demand upon it from one who is weaker, and at sight of the big man's helplessness Cabot was instantly nerved to renewed effort. He sat up, cut loose his snowshoes, closed the open door, and rid himself of his snow-laden outer garments. Then, by a supreme effort, he managed to drag the unconscious man to a bed that was piled with robes and lean him against it. His eyes had already lighted on a jug of water, and fetching this he bathed the sufferer's face, washed the blood from his mouth, and finally had the satisfaction of seeing his eyes un-

close. Then he helped him on to the bed, and though during the operation the man's face expressed the most intense pain, he uttered no sound. But the movement was accompanied by another hemorrhage, so severe that it seemed to our distressed lad as though the man must surely bleed to death before it was checked. When it finally ceased the exhausted sufferer dropped asleep, and, for the first time since entering that place of mysteries, Cabot found an opportunity for looking about him.

Although the room was small it was comfortably furnished with a table, chairs—one of which was a rocker—a lounge, and the bed on which the man-wolf lay. There were no windows nor doors except those in front. The ceiling was of heavy canvas tightly stretched, while the walls were hung with the skins of fur-bearing animals, and the floor was covered with rugs of the same material. At first Cabot paid no attention to these details, for his eyes were fixed upon the most astonishing thing he had seen in all Labrador. It was a lamp that, depending from the ceiling, gave to the room an illumination as brilliant as daylight.

"Electric, as I live!" gasped the young engineer. "A regular incandescent, and those lights out on the trail must have been the same. That was an electric bell too. I know it now, though

I couldn't believe my ears at the time. The light he scared the Indians with must have been an electric flash, worked by a storage battery. But it is all so incredible! I wonder if I am really awake or still dreaming?"

To assure himself on this point Cabot went to the light, and, as he did so, came upon another surprise greater than any that had preceded it. He had wondered at the comfortable temperature of the room, for there was nowhere a fire to be seen, and the blizzard still howled outside with unabated fury. Now, on drawing near to the lamp, he found himself also approaching some heretofore unobserved source of heat, which he discovered to be a drum of sheet iron. It stood by itself, unconnected with any chimney, and apparently had no receptacle for any form of fuel, solid, liquid, or gaseous.

"A Balfour electric heater," murmured Cabot, in an awe-stricken tone, "and I didn't even know they had been perfected. I don't suppose there are half-a-dozen in use in all the world, and yet here is one of them doing its full duty up here in the Labrador wilderness, a thousand miles from anywhere. It is fully equal to any tale of the Arabian Nights, and Mr. Homolupus must, as the natives say, be either a god or a devil. I do wonder who he is, where he came from, what has happened to him, where he gets his electricity,

and a thousand other things. I wish he would wake up, and I wish he could talk."

Cabot's curiosity concerning the weird music that had drawn him to that place had been partially satisfied by the discovery of a violin on the floor beside the sick man's bed. Now, as he flung himself wearily down on the lounge for a bit of rest, he became conscious of the muffled b-r-r-r of a dynamo. That accounted in a measure for the electric lights, but still left our lad in a daze of wonder at the nature of his surroundings.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AN ELECTRICIAN IN THE WILDERNESS.

WHEN Cabot threw himself down on that lounge he fully intended to remain awake, or at most to take only a series of short naps, always holding himself in readiness to assist the sufferer on the opposite side of the room. But exhausted nature proved too much for his good intentions, and he had hardly lain down before he fell into a dead, dreamless sleep that lasted for many hours. When he next awoke it was with a start, and he sat up bewildered by the strangeness of his environment. Daylight was streaming in at the frost-covered windows and the storm of the night before had evidently spent its fury.

Almost the first thing he saw was the tall form of his host bending feebly over the electric stove. His face was drawn with pain, and he was so weak that he was compelled to support himself by grasping the table with one hand while with the other he stirred the contents of a simmering kettle.

"Let me do that, sir!" cried Cabot, springing

to his feet. "You are not fit to be out of your bed, and I am perfectly familiar with the management of electrical cooking apparatus, though I don't know much about cooking itself."

The man hesitated a moment, and then permitted the other to lead him back to his bed, on which he sank with a groan. Here Cabot made him as comfortable as possible before turning his attention to the stove. On it he found two kettles, each having its own wire connections, in one of which was boiling water while the other contained a meat stew. On the table was a box of tea, a bowl of sugar, and a plate heaped with hard bread. Finding other dishes in a cupboard, Cabot made a pot of tea, turned off the electric current, and served breakfast. Before eating a mouthful himself he prepared a bowl of broth for his patient, which the latter managed to swallow after many attempts and painful effort.

Cabot ate ravenously, and, after his meal, felt once more ready to face any number of difficulties. First he went to the bedside of his host and said:

"Now, Mr. Homolupus, I want to find out what is the trouble and what I can do for you. Are you wounded, or just naturally ill?"

The man looked at his questioner for a moment, as though he were on the point of speaking. Then he seemed to change his mind, and,

reaching for a pencil and pad that lay close at hand, he wrote:

"I am shot in the chest."

"Who—I mean how——" began Cabot, and then, realising that his curiosity could well wait, he added: "But, with your permission, I will examine the wound and see if there is anything I can do."

With this he sought and gently removed a blood-soaked bandage, thereby disclosing a sight so ghastly that it almost unnerved him. The wound was so terrible, and the loss of blood from it had evidently been so great, that how even the giant frame of the man-wolf could have survived it was amazing. Having no knowledge of surgery, Cabot could only bathe and rebandage it. Then he said:

"Now, I am going to be your nurse, and you must lie perfectly still without attempting to get up again until I give you leave."

Seeing an expression of dissent in the man's face, he continued:

"It's all right. I am under the greatest of obligations to you, and am only too glad of a chance to pay some of it back. So I shall stay right here just as long as you need me. Fortunately I know something about both electricity and machinery, having been educated at a technical institute, so that I shall be able to manage

very well with your plant. But I do wish you could explain a few things to me. Is your name really 'Homolupus'?"

The sufferer smiled and wrote on his pad:

"My name is Watson Balfour."

"Of London?" queried Cabot.

The man nodded.

"Is it possible that you can be Watson Balfour, the celebrated English electrician, who is supposed to have been lost at sea some years ago?"

Again the man smiled and made a sign of assent.

For a moment Cabot stared, well nigh speechless with the wonder and excitement of this discovery. Then he broke into a torrent of exclamations and questions.

"Why, Mr. Balfour, I know you so well by reputation that you seem like an old friend. Your 'Handbook of Electricity' and your 'Comparative Voltage' are text books at the Institute. The whole scientific world mourned your supposed death. But how do you happen to be up here, and how have you managed to establish an electric plant in this wilderness? Why are you masquerading as a man-wolf? How did you lose the power of speech? How did you become so severely wounded? Can't you tell me some of these things?"

For answer Mr. Balfour wrote: "Perhaps, some time. Tell first how you came here."

So Cabot, forced to curb for the present his own overpowering curiosity, sat down and told of all that had happened since the departure of the man-wolf from Locked Harbour. When he had finished he said:

"And now, I ought to go outside and see if I can discover any trace of my companions, who must be awfully cut up over my disappearance. But don't be uneasy, Mr. Balfour, I shan't go far, and whether I find them or not I shall certainly come back to stay just as long as you need me. I hope you will sleep while I am gone, and I wish you would promise not to leave your bed, or move more than is absolutely necessary, before my return."

When Cabot first stepped outside the shelter that had proved such a haven of safety to him, he was dazzled by the brilliancy of the day. After becoming somewhat accustomed to the glare of sunlight on new-fallen snow, he turned to see what sort of a house he had just left. To his surprise there was no house; the only suggestion of one being two windows and a door set in a wall of rock that was built at the base of a cliff.

"It is a cavern," thought Cabot, "and that is the reason the room is so easily kept warm.

"MY NAME IS WATSON BALFOUR."

Mighty good thing to have in this country, especially when it is lined with furs."

The snow lay unbroken, and there was no sign of the trail he had made the night before. For a short distance, however, he could go in but one direction, for the only way out was through the narrow defile by which he had entered. At its mouth he found the wire over which he had fallen, and thereby given notice of his approach by causing the ringing of an electric bell.

"When he heard it he turned on the lights," said Cabot to himself. "It's a great scheme for scaring off Indians and attracting white men. I wonder if any other person ever found the place? What a marvellous thing my stumbling on it was, anyhow. Now, which way did I come?"

Gazing blankly at the surrounding chaos of snow-covered rocks, our lad could form no idea of the route by which he had been led to that place, through the storm and darkness of the preceding night, nor of how he might leave it.

"There is no use wandering aimlessly," he decided at length, "and I'll either have to gain a bird's-eye view of the country or get Mr. Balfour to make me a map. To think that I should have discovered him, and here of all places in the world. What a sensation it will make when I tell of it. Of course I shall do so, for I'll get out of this fix all right somehow. What a state

of mind poor White must be in this morning. I know I should be in his place. He's all right, though, with Yim to pull him through, and they'll make Indian Harbour easy enough. Then I shall be reported lost, and after a while Mr. Hepburn will hear the news. Wonder what he thinks has become of me anyhow? I am following out instructions, and wintering in Labrador fast enough. Only I don't seem to have much time to investigate mining properties, and of course it's no use trying to find 'em buried under feet of snow. Perhaps Mr. Balfour has discovered some while roaming around the country as a man-wolf. How absurd to think of 'Voltage' Balfour as a man-wolf! Wonder why he did it? How I wish he could talk! Wonder why he can't?"

While thus cogitating, Cabot had also been climbing a nearby eminence that promised a view of the outlying country, but from it he could see nothing save other hills rising still higher and an unbroken waste of snow.

"It's no use," he sighed. "I don't believe I could find them, even if I had plenty of time. As it is, I don't dare stay away from Mr. Balfour any longer. I'm afraid he's a very sick man, with a slim chance of ever pulling through."

So Cabot, after an absence of several hours, turned back towards the snug shelter so provi-

dentially provided for him, and for which he was just then more grateful than he could express. He was thinking of the many wonders of the place when he reached its door; but, as he opened it and stepped inside the room, he was greeted by a greater surprise than he had yet encountered. Nothing was changed about the interior, and the wounded man lay as Cabot had left him, but with the appearance of the latter he exclaimed:

"Thank God, dear lad, that you have come back to me! It seemed as though I should go crazy if left alone a minute longer."

Cabot stared in amazement. "Is it a miracle?" he finally asked, "and has your speech been restored to you, or have you been able to speak all the time?"

"I have been able, but not willing," was the reply. "I had thought to die without speaking to a human being. I even avoided my fellows, believing myself sufficient unto myself. But God has punished my arrogance and shown me my weakness. Until you came no stranger has ever set foot within this dwelling, to none have I spoken, and not even to you did I intend to speak, but with your going my folly became plain. I feared you might never return; the horror of living alone, and the greater horror of dying alone, swept over me. Then I prayed for

you to come. I promised to speak as soon as you were within hearing. Every moment since then I have watched for you and longed for your coming as a dying man longs for the breath of life. Promise that you will not leave me again."

"I have already promised, and now I repeat, that I will not leave you so long as you have need of me," replied Cabot. "But tell me——"

"I will tell you everything," interrupted the wounded man, "but first you must look after the dynamo. It has stopped, and if you cannot set it going again we must both perish."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MAN-WOLF'S STORY.

An accident to the dynamo in that place where there was no fuel, and electricity must be depended upon for light and heat, was so serious a matter that, for a moment, even Cabot's curiosity concerning his host was merged in anxiety.

"Where shall I find it?" he asked.

"In the cavern back of this room. The doorway is behind that bearskin. This upper row of keys connects with the storage battery, and the second key controls the lights of the dynamo room. If there is a bad break I can manage to get to it, but I wouldn't try until you came, because I promised not to move."

All this was said in a voice that faltered from weakness, and a wave of pity surged in Cabot's breast as he realised how dependent upon him this man, so recently a mental as well as a physical giant, had become.

"I expect I shall be able to attend to it all right," he said decisively, as he turned on the stored current that would light the unknown

cavern. "At any rate, I shall be able to report the condition of things, so that you can advise me what to do, or else my training is a greater failure than I think."

With this he lifted the bearskin, opened a door thus disclosed, and found himself in a small, well-lighted cavern that was at once a dynamo room, a workshop, and a storehouse for a confused miscellany of articles. Without pausing to investigate any of these he went directly to a dynamo that had been set up at one side and examined it carefully. It appeared in perfect order, and the trouble must evidently be sought elsewhere.

Cabot had wondered by what power the dynamo was driven, and now, hearing a sound of running water, he stepped in that direction. A short distance away he discovered a swift-flowing subterranean stream, in which revolved a water wheel of rude, but serviceable, construction. As nothing seemed wrong with it, he was obliged to look further, and finally found the cause of trouble to be a transmitting belt, the worn-out lacing of which had parted. As portions of the belt itself had been caught in the pulleys and badly cut, it was necessary to hunt through the pile of material for a new one, and for leather suitable for lacing. Then the new belt must be accurately measured, laced together, and adjusted to its pulleys.

Although the temperature of the cavern was many degrees above that of the outside air, it was still so low that Cabot worked slowly and with numbed fingers. Thus more than an hour had elapsed before the dynamo was again in running order, and he was at liberty to return to the living room. In the meantime his curiosity concerning this strange place of abode and its mysterious tenant was increased by the remarkable collection of articles stored on all sides. There was no end of machinery, tools, and electrical apparatus of all kinds, including miles of copper wire and chemicals for charging batteries. Besides these, there were ropes, canvas, furniture, boxes, barrels, and other things too numerous to mention.

"What a prize this place would have been for the Indians if they had ever discovered it," reflected the young engineer. "I wonder that he dared go off and leave it unguarded."

When he finally returned to the outer room, he found it even colder than the cavern in which he had been working, and realised, as never before, the value of the knowledge that had enabled him to restore the usefulness of that electric heater. After getting it into operation, and making his report to the sick man, who had impatiently awaited him, there was another meal to prepare.

So, in spite of Cabot's overwhelming desire to hear Mr. Balfour's story, there was so much to be done first that the short day had merged into another night before the opportunity arrived. When it came, our lad drew a chair to the bedside of his patient and said:

"Now, sir, if you feel able to talk, and are willing to tell me how you happen to be living in this place, I shall be more than glad to listen."

"I am willing," replied the other, "but must be brief, since talking has become an exertion. As perhaps you know, I was a working electrician in London, where, though I had a good business, I had not accumulated much money. Consequently I was greatly pleased to receive what promised to be a lucrative contract from a Canadian railway company for supplying and installing a quantity of electrical apparatus along their line. I at once invested every penny I could raise in the purchase of material and in the charter of a sailing vessel to transport it to this country. On the eve of sailing I married a young lady to whom I had long been engaged, and, with light hearts, we set forth on our wedding trip across the Atlantic.

"The first two weeks of that voyage were filled with such happiness that I trembled for fear it should be snatched from me. During that time

we had fair weather and favouring winds. Then we ran into a gale that lasted for days, and drove us far out of our course. One mast went by the board, the other was cut away to save the ship, and, while in this helpless condition, she struck at night, what I afterwards learned to be, a mass of floating ice. At the time all hands believed us to be on the coast, and the crew, taking our only seaworthy boat, put off in a panic, while I was below preparing my wife for departure. Thus deserted, we awaited the death that we expected with each passing moment, but it failed to come and the ship still floated. With earliest daylight I was on deck, and, to my amazement, saw land on both sides. We had been driven into the mouth of a broad estuary, up which wind and tide were still carrying us.

"For three days our helpless drift, to and fro, was continued, and then our ship grounded on a ledge at the foot of these cliffs. Getting ashore with little difficulty, we were dismayed to find ourselves in an uninhabited wilderness, devoid even of vegetation other than moss and low growing shrubs. One of my first discoveries was this cavern with its subterranean stream of water, and two openings, one of which gives easy access to the sea. Knowing that our ship must, sooner or later, go to pieces, and desirous of saving what property I might, I rigged up a derrick at

the mouth of the cavern, and, with the aid of my brave wife, transferred everything movable from the wreck; a labour of months.

"Winter was now at hand, and, foreseeing that we must spend it where we were, I walled up the openings and made all possible preparations to fight the coming cold. We burned wood from the wreck while it lasted, and in the meantime I labored almost night and day at the establishment of an electric plant. But the awful winter came and found it still unfinished, and before the coming of another spring I was left alone."

Here the speaker paused, overcome as much by his feelings as by weakness, and, during the silence that followed, Cabot stole away, ostensibly to see that the dynamo was running smoothly. When he returned the narrator had recovered his calmness, and was ready to continue his story.

"She had never been strong," he said, "and I so cruelly allowed her to overwork herself that she had no strength left with which to fight the winter. She died in my arms in this very room, and I promised never to leave her. Also, after her death, I vowed that my last words to her should be my last to any human being, and, until this day, I have kept that vow, foolish and wicked though it was. I have talked and read aloud

when alone, but to no man have I spoken. I have also avoided intercourse with my fellows, selfishly preferring to nurse my sorrow in sinful rebellion against God's will. Now am I justly punished by being stricken down in the pride of my strength. At the same time God has shown his everlasting mercy by sending you to me in the time of my sore need. And you have promised to stay with me until the end, which I feel assured is not far off."

"I trust it may be," said Cabot, "for the world can ill afford to spare a man of your attainments."

"The world has forgotten me ere this," replied Mr. Balfour, with a faint smile, "and has also managed to get along very well without me. Whether it has or has not I feel that I am shortly to rejoin my dear one."

"How did it happen? I mean your wound," asked Cabot, abruptly changing the subject. "Was it an accident?"

"It may have been, but I believe not. Dressed in wolf skins, I was creeping up on a small herd of caribou two days ago, when I was shot by some unknown person, probably an Indian hunting the same game, though I never saw him. I managed to crawl home, and as I lay here, filled with the horror of dying alone, the ringing of my alarm bell announced a coming

of either man or beast. I found strength to turn on the outer lights and to sound a call for aid on my violin that I hoped would be heard and understood."

"It was fortunate for me that you did both those things," said Cabot, "for I should certainly have remained where I fell after stumbling over the wire if it had not been for the combination of light and music. But tell me, sir, why have you masqueraded as a man-wolf?"

"For convenience in hunting, as well as to inspire terror in the minds of savages and keep them at a respectful distance from this place."

"Have they ever troubled you?"

"At first they were inclined to, but not of late years."

"Not of late years! Why, sir, how many years have you dwelt in this place?"

"A little more than five."

"Five years alone and cut off from the world! I should think you would feel like a prisoner shut in a dungeon."

"No, for I have led the life of my own choice, and it has been full of active interests. I have had to hunt, trap, and fish for my own support. I have tried to redress some wrongs, and have been able to relieve much distress among the improvident natives. I have busied myself with electrical experiments, and have explored the

surrounding country for a hundred miles on all sides."

"Have you discovered any indications of mineral wealth during your explorations?" asked the young engineer, recalling his previous thought on this subject.

"Quite a number, of which the most important is right here; for this range of cliffs is so largely composed of red hematite as to form one of the richest ore beds in the world."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CABOT IS LEFT ALONE.

DEEPLY interested and affected as Cabot had been by the electrician's story, his excitement over its conclusion caused him momentarily to forget everything else.

"Does the ore show anywhere about here?" he asked eagerly.

"Yes. Lift one of the skins hanging against the wall and you will find it. It is better, though, in the lower portions of the inner cavern, for the deeper you go the richer it gets."

In another moment our young engineer was chipping bits of rock from the nearest wall, and then he must need explore those of the store-room, where, on a bank of the subterranean stream, he found ore as rich as any he had ever seen, even in museums. Returning with hands and pockets full of specimens, he said:

"This is the very thing for which I came to Labrador, but have thus far failed to find. Of course I have discovered plenty of indications, for the whole country is full of iron, but nowhere

else have I found it in quantity or of a quality that would pay to work. Here you have both, and close to a navigable waterway."

"On which the largest ships may moor to the very cliffs," added Mr. Balfour.

"It means a fortune to the owner, and I congratulate you, sir."

"My dear lad, I don't want it! I am an electrician, not a miner. Even if I were inclined to work it, which I am not, I should not be permitted to do so, for my earthly interests are very nearly ended. Therefore I cheerfully relinquish in your favour whatever claim I may have acquired by discovery or occupation. If you want it, take it, and may God's blessing go with the gift. Also, under this bed, you will find a bag containing more specimens that may interest you. Of them we will talk at another time, for now I am weary."

With this the man turned his face to the wall, while Cabot, securing the bag, quickly became absorbed in an examination of its contents. Among these he found rich specimens of iron and copper ores, slabs of the rare and exquisitely beautiful Labradorite, with its sheen of peacock-blue, and even bits of gold-bearing quartz. For a long time he examined and tested these; then, with a sigh of content, he laid them aside and went to bed. His mission to Labrador was at

length accomplished, and now he had only to get back to New York as quickly as possible.

But getting to New York from that place, under existing circumstances, was something infinitely easier to plan than to accomplish. To begin with, he had promised to remain with the new-found friend, who was also so greatly his benefactor, so long as he should be needed, and he meant to fulfil the promise to the letter. But to do so taxed his patience to the utmost; for, in spite of the electrician's belief that he had not long to live, the passing of many weeks found his condition but little changed. At the same time, in spite of Cabot's best nursing and ceaseless attention, he failed to gain strength.

Having once broken his years of silence, he now found his greatest pleasure in talking, and Cabot had frequently to interrupt his conversation on the pretence of taking outside exercise, to prevent him from exhausting himself in that way. He hated to do this, for Mr. Balfour's words were always instructive, and he so freely yielded the established secrets of his profession, as well as those of his own recent discoveries, to his young friend that Cabot acquired a rich store of valuable information during the short days and long nights of that Labrador winter.

With the apparatus at hand, he was able to conduct many experiments and put into practice

a number of his newly acquired theories. The sick man followed these with keenest interest, and aided his pupil with shrewd suggestions. At other times they discussed the mineral wealth of Labrador, and Mr. Balfour drew rough diagrams to show localities from which his various specimens had been brought. He also gave much time to a sketch map of the surrounding country, especially the coast between the place where the "Sea Bee" had been left and Indian Harbour, beyond which his knowledge did not extend.

With these congenial occupations, time never hung heavily in the wilderness home of the Man-wolf, and, though bitter cold might reign outside, fierce storms rage, and driving snows pile themselves into mountainous drifts, neither hunger nor cold could penetrate its snug interior, warmed and lighted by the magic of modern science. With the passing weeks the old year died and a new one was born. January merged into February, and days began noticeably to lengthen. Through all these weeks Cabot kept up his strength by frequent exercise in the open, where, in conflict with storm and cold, he ever won some part of their own ruggedness. At the same time his patient grew slowly but surely weaker, until at length he could converse only in whispers, and experienced such difficulty in swallowing that he had almost ceased to take

nourishment. One evening while affairs stood thus, he roused himself sufficiently to inquire what day of the month it was.

"The thirteenth of February," replied Cabot, who had kept careful note of the calendar.

Instantly the man brightened, and said, with an unexpected strength of voice: "Six years to-morrow since we were married. Five years to-day since she left me, and to-night I shall rejoin her. Wish me joy, lad, for the long period of our separation is ended. Good-night, good-bye, God bless you!"

With this final utterance he again lapsed into silence, closed his eyes, and seemed to sleep. Several times during that night Cabot stole softly to his patient's bedside, but the latter was always asleep, and he would not disturb him. Only in the morning, when daylight revealed the marble-like repose of feature, did he know that a glad reunion of long parted lovers had been effected, and that it was he who was left alone.

Although the position in which our lad now found himself was a very trying one, he had anticipated and planned for it. He had no boards with which to make a coffin, but there was plenty of stout canvas, and in a double thickness of this he sewed the body of his friend. Before doing so he dug away the snow beside a cairn of rocks that marked the last resting place of her who

had gone before, and placed the electric heater, with extended wire connections, on the ground thus exposed. Within a few hours this soil became sufficiently thawed to permit him to dig a shallow grave, to which, by great effort, he managed to remove the shrouded body. After covering it, and piling above it rocks as large as he could lift, he returned to the empty dwelling, having completed the hardest and saddest day's work of his life.

So terrible was the loneliness of that night, and so anxious was Cabot to take his departure, that he was again astir long before daylight, completing his preparations. He had previously built a light sled that he proposed to drag, and had planned exactly what it should carry. Now he loaded this with a canvas-wrapped package of cooked provisions, a sleeping bag, a rifle together with a few rounds of ammunition, a light axe, his precious bag of specimens, and the Manwolf's electric flashlight with its battery newly charged.

With everything thus in readiness he ate a hearty meal, threw the dynamo out of gear, closed the door and shutters of the place that had given him the shelter of a home, adjusted the hauling straps of his sled, and set resolutely forth on his venturesome journey across the frozen wilderness.

In his mittened hands Cabot carried a stout staff tipped with a boathook, and this proved of inestimable service in aiding him down the face of the cliffs to the frozen surface of the estuary; for, by Mr. Balfour's advice, he had determined to follow the coast line rather than attempt the shorter but more uncertain inland route.

Although the distance to be covered was but little over one hundred miles, the journey was so beset with difficulties and hardships that only our young engineer's splendid physical condition and recently acquired skill, combined with indomitable pluck, enabled him to accomplish it. While he sometimes met with smooth stretches of snow-covered ice, it was generally piled in huge wind-rows, incredibly rugged and difficult to surmount. Again it would be broken away from the base of sheer cliffs, where stretches of open water would necessitate toilsome inland detours over or around lofty headlands. He was always buffetted by strong winds, and often halted by blinding snowstorms. He had no fire, no warm food, and no shelter save such as he could make by burrowing into snowdrifts. During the weary hours of one whole night he held a pack of snarling wolves at bay by means of his flashlight. But always he pushed doggedly forward, and after ten days of struggle, exhausted almost beyond the power for further effort, but

immensely proud of his achievement, he reached the goal of his long desire.

Indian Harbour—with its hospital, its church, its two or three houses, and score of native huts, seemed to our lad almost a metropolis after his months of wilderness life, and the welcome he received from its warm-hearted inhabitants when he made known his identity was that of one raised from the dead. White Baldwin and Yim had been there many weeks earlier, and had reported his disappearance under circumstances that left no hope of his ever again being seen alive. Then the latter had set forth on his return journey, while White had joined a mail carrier and started for Battle Harbour.

Now occurred what promised to be a serious interruption to Cabot's southward advance, for no one was proposing to travel in that direction, and, in spite of their hospitality, his new acquaintances were not inclined to undertake the arduous task of guiding him to Battle Harbour, 250 miles away, without being well paid for their labour, and our young engineer had no money. Nor, after his recent experience, did he care to again encounter the perils of the wilderness alone.

But fortune once more favoured him; for while he was chafing against this enforced detention, Dr. Graham Aspland, house surgeon of

the Battle Harbour Hospital, who makes a heroic sledge journey to the far north every winter, arrived on his annual errand of mercy. He would set out on his return trip a few days later, and would be more than pleased to have Cabot for a companion.

Thus it happened that one bright day in early March the music of sledge bells and the cracking of a dog driver's whip attracted the inmates of the Battle Harbour Hospital to doors and windows to witness an arrival. Two fur-clad figures followed a great travelling sledge, and one of them dragged a small sled of his own. As he came to a halt, and began wearily to loosen his hauling gear, he cast a glance at one of the upper windows, and uttered an exclamation of amazement. Then, with a joyful cry, he shouted:

"Hello! White, old man! Run down here and say you're glad I've come!"

CHAPTER XXIX.

DRIFTING WITH THE ICE PACK.

CABOT had learned from Dr. Aspland of White's arrival at Battle Harbour two months before, with a leg so badly wrenched by slipping into an ice crevice that he had gone to the hospital for treatment, but had expected that he would long ere this have taken his departure. At the same time White had, of course, given up all hope of ever again seeing the friend to whom he had become so deeply attached. He had been terribly cut up over Cabot's disappearance on the night of the blizzard, and, with the faithful Yim, had spent days in searching for him. They had gone back to the timber, only to find the Indian camp deserted, and that its recent occupants had made a hasty departure. Finally they had given over the hopeless search and had sadly continued their southward journey.

Now to again behold Cabot alive and well filled poor White with such joyful amazement that for some minutes he could not frame an intelligent sentence. He flew down to where the

new arrival still struggled with his hauling gear, and flung himself so impulsively upon him that both rolled over in the snow. There, with gasping exclamations of delight, they wrestled themselves into a mood of comparative calmness that enabled them to regain their feet and begin to ask questions.

For some time White had been sufficiently recovered to resume his journey, had an opportunity offered for so doing, but, as none had come to him, he had earned his board by acting as nurse in the hospital. If he had been anxious to depart before, he was doubly so now that he had regained his comrade, and Cabot fully shared his impatience of further delay. But how they were to reach the coast of Newfoundland they could not imagine. It would still be many weeks before vessels of any kind could be expected at Battle Harbour, and they had no money with which to undertake the expensive journey by way of Quebec.

"If only the ocean would freeze over, we could walk home!" exclaimed Cabot one day, as the two friends sat gloomily discussing their prospects. And then that very thing came to pass.

A dog sledge arrived from Forteau, that same evening, bringing a wounded man to the hospital for treatment, and its driver reported the Strait of Belle Isle as being so solidly packed with ice

that several persons had traversed it from shore to shore.

"If others have made the trip, why can't we?" cried Cabot.

"I am willing to try it, if you are," replied White, and by daylight of the following morning the impatient lads were on their way up the coast in search of the ice bridge to Newfoundland. Cabot had traded his electric flashlight for a supply of provisions sufficient to load his sled, which they took turns at hauling, and four days after leaving Battle Harbour they reached L'Anse au Loup. At that point the strait is only a dozen miles wide, and there, if anywhere, they could cross it. It was midday when they came to the winter huts of L'Anse au Loup, and they had intended remaining in one of them over night, but a short conversation with its owner caused them to change their plans.

"Yas, there be solid pack clear to ither side all right," he said, "but happen it 'll go out any time. Fust change o' wind 'll loose it, and one's to be looked for. Ah wouldn't resk it on no account mahself, but if Ah had it to do, Ah'd go in a hurry 'ithout wasting no time."

"It is a case of necessity with us," said Cabot.

"Yes," agreed White, "we simply must go, and the quicker we set about it the better. If we make haste I believe we can get across by dark."

Thus determined, and disregarding a further expostulation from the fisherman, our lads set their faces resolutely towards the confusion of hummocks, "pans," floes tilted on edge, and upreared masses of blue ice forming the "strait's pack" of that season. Five minutes later they were lost to sight amid the frozen chaos.

"Wal," soliloquized the man left standing on shore, "Ah 'opes they'll make it, but it's a fearsome resk, an' Gawd 'elp 'em if come a shift o' wind afore they're over."

Nothing, in all their previous experience of Labrador travel, had equalled the tumultuous ruggedness of the way by which Cabot and White were now attempting to bridge that boisterous arm of the stormy northern ocean, and to advance at all taxed their strength to the utmost. To transport their laden sled was next to impossible, but they dared not leave it behind, and with their progress thus impeded they were barely half way to the Newfoundland coast when night overtook them. Even though the gathering darkness had not compelled a halt, their utter exhaustion would have demanded a rest. For an hour White had been obliged to clinch his teeth to keep from crying out with the pain of his weakened, and now overstrained, ankle, and when Cabot announced that it was no use trying to get further before morning, he sank to the ice with a groan.

Full of sympathy for his comrade's suffering, the Yankee lad at once set to work to make him as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and soon had him lying on a sleeping bag, in a niche formed by two uptilted slabs of ice. Profiting by past experience, they had procured and brought with them an Eskimo lamp with its moss wick, a small quantity of seal oil, and a supply of matches, so that, after a while, Cabot procured enough boiling water to furnish a small pot of tea. When they had eaten their simple meal of tea, hard bread, and pemmican, White's ankle was bathed with water as hot as he could bear it, and then the weary lads turned in for such sleep as their cheerless quarters might yield. About midnight the wind that had for many days blown steadily from the eastward changed to northwest, and, with the coming of daylight, it was blowing half a gale from that direction.

To Cabot this change meant little or nothing, and he was suggesting that they remain where they were until White's leg should be thoroughly rested, when the other interrupted him with:

"But we can't stay here. Don't you feel the change of wind?"

"What of it?" asked Cabot.

"Oh, nothing at all, only that it will drive the ice out to sea, and, if we haven't reached land before it begins to move, we'll go with it."

"You don't mean it!" cried Cabot, now thoroughly alarmed. "In that case we'd best get a move on in a hurry. Do you think your leg will stand the trip?"

"It will have to," rejoined White, grimly; and a few minutes later they had resumed the toilsome progress that was now a race for life. But it was a snail's race, for the task of moving the sled had devolved entirely upon Cabot, White having all he could do to drag himself along. Each step gave him such exquisite pain that, by the time they had accomplished a couple of miles, he was crawling on hands and knees.

Still, as Cabot hopefully pointed out, the Newfoundland coast was in plain sight, and the ice held as firm as ever. He had hardly spoken when there came a distant roaring, that quickly developed into a sound of crashing and grinding not to be mistaken.

"The ice is moving!" gasped White.

"Then," said Cabot bravely, "we'll move too. Come on, old man. We'll leave the sled, and I'll get you ashore even if I have to carry you. It isn't so very far now."

With this the speaker disengaged his hauling straps and turned to assist his comrade, but, to his dismay, the latter lay on the ice pale and motionless. What with pain, over-exertion, and ex-

citement, White had fainted, and Cabot must either carry him to the shore, remain beside him until he recovered, or leave him to his fate and save himself by flight over the still unbroken ice. He tried the first plan, picked White up, staggered a few steps with his helpless burden, and discovered its futility. Then he proceeded to put the second into execution by calmly unloading the sled and making such arrangements as his slender means would allow for his comrade's comfort. The third plan came to him merely as a thought, to be promptly dismissed as unworthy of consideration.

In the meantime the ominous sounds of cracking, grinding, rending, and splitting grew ever louder, and came ever closer, until, at length, Cabot could see and feel that the ice all about him was in motion. By the time White recovered consciousness, a broad lane of black water had opened between that place and the Newfoundland coast, while others could be seen in various directions.

"What are you doing?" asked White, feebly, after he had struggled back to a knowledge of passing events, and had, for some minutes, been watching his friend's movements.

"Building an igloo," answered Cabot, cheerily. "We might as well be comfortable while we can, and though my hut won't have the archi-

tectural beauty that Yim could give it, I believe it will keep us warm."

It would have been more than easy, and perfectly natural, under the circumstances, to give way to utter despair; for of the several hopeless situations in which our lads had been placed during the past few months, the present was, by far, the worst. At any moment the ice beneath them might open and drop them into fathomless waters. Even if it held fast, they were certainly being carried out to sea, where they would be exposed to furious gales that must ultimately work their destruction. In spite of all this, Cabot Grant insisted on remaining hopefully cheerful. He said he had squeezed out of just as tight places before, and believed he would get out of this one somehow. At any rate, as crying wouldn't help it, he wasn't going to cry. Besides all sorts of things might happen. They might drift ashore somewhere or into the track of passing steamers. Wouldn't it be fine to be picked up and carried straight to New York? If steamers failed them, they were almost certain to sight fishing boats sooner or later.

"Yes," added White, catching some of his companion's hopefulness, "or we may meet with the sealers who leave St. Johns about this time every year and hunt seals on the ice pack off shore."

"Of course," agreed the other. "So what's the use of worrying?"

In spite of the brave front and cheerful aspect that Cabot maintained before his helpless comrade, he often broke down when off by himself, vainly straining his eyes from the summit of some ice hummock for any hopeful sign, and acknowledged that their situation was indeed desperate.

That first night, spent sleeplessly and in momentary expectation that the ice beneath them would break, was the worst. After that they dreaded more than anything the fate that would overtake them with the disappearance of their slender stock of provisions. While this diminished with alarming rapidity, despite their efforts at economy, their ice island drifted out from the strait, and soon afterwards became incorporated with the great Arctic pack that always in the spring forces its resistless way steadily southward towards the melting waters of the Gulf Stream.

Land had disappeared with the second day of the ice movement, and after that, for a week, nothing occurred to break the terrible monotony of life on the pack, as experienced by our young castaways. Then came the dreaded announcement that one portion of their supplies was exhausted. There was no longer a drop of oil for their lamp.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE COMING OF DAVID GIDGE.

WHITE, who was still confined to the hut with his strained ankle, announced that they no longer had any oil upon Cabot's return at dusk from a day of fruitless hunting and outlook duty on the ice.

"That's bad," replied the latter, in a tone whose cheerfulness strove to conceal his anxiety. "Now we'll have to burn the sled. Lucky thing for us that it's of wood instead of being one of those bone affairs such as we saw at Locked Harbour."

"Our provisions are nearly gone too," added White. "In fact we've only enough for one more day."

"Oh, well! A lot of things can happen in a day, and some of them may happen to us."

But the only thing worthy of note that happened on the following day was a storm of such violence as to compel even stout-hearted Cabot to remain behind the sheltering walls of the hut, and, while it raged, our shivering lads, crouched

above a tiny blaze of sled wood, ate their last morsel of food. They still had a small quantity of tea, but that was all. As soon, therefore, as the storm abated Cabot sallied forth with his gun, still hopeful, in spite of many disappointments, of finding some bird or beast that, by a lucky shot, might be brought to the table.

The ice pack was of such vast extent that it seemed as though it must support animal life of some kind, but Cabot traversed it that day for many miles without finding so much as a track or a feather. That night's supper was a pot of tea, and a similar one formed the sole nourishment upon which Cabot again set forth the next morning for another of those weary hunts.

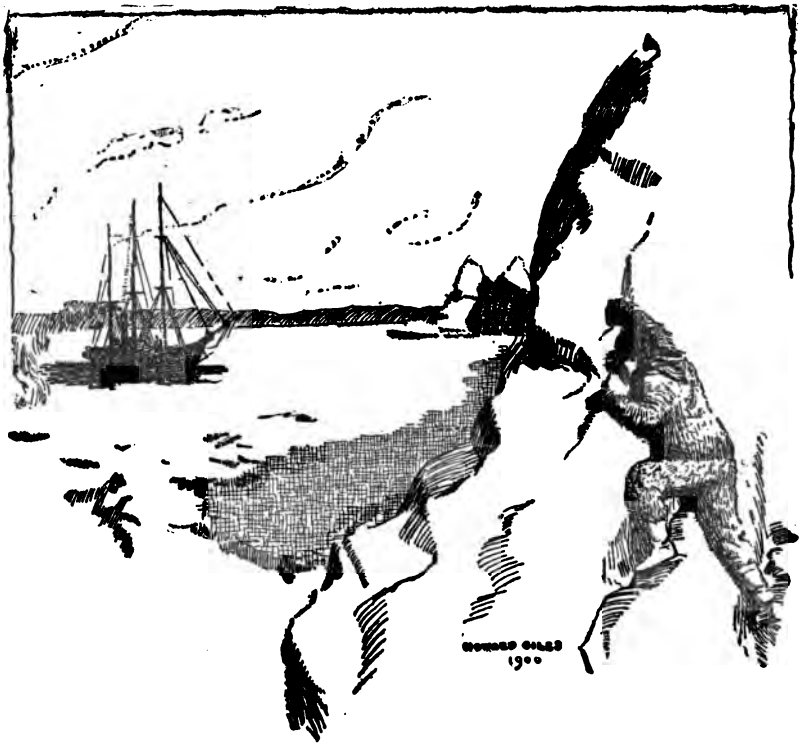
This time he went further from the hut than he had dared go on previous expeditions; but on them he had been hopeful and knew that even though he failed in his hunting he would still find food awaiting him on his return. Now he was desperate with hunger, and the knowledge that failing in his present effort he would not have strength for another. In his mind, too, he carried a vivid picture of poor White, crouching in that wretched hut over an expiring blaze fed by the very last of their wood.

"I simply can't go back empty-handed!" he cried aloud. "It would be better not to go back

at all, and let him hope for my coming to the last."

So the young hunter pushed wearily and hopelessly on, until he found himself at the foot of a line of icebergs that had been frozen into the pack, where they resembled a range of fantastically shaped hills. Cabot had seen them from a distance on a previous expedition, and had wondered what lay beyond. Now he determined to find out, though he knew if he once crossed them there would be little chance of regaining the hut before dark. It was a laborious climb, and several times he slid back to the place of starting, but each mishap of this kind only made him the more determined to gain the top. At length, breathless and bruised, crawling on hands and knees, he reached a point from which he could look beyond the barrier. As he did so, he turned sick and uttered a choking cry.

What he saw in that first glance was so utterly incredible that it could not be true, though if it were it would be the most welcome and beautiful sight in all the world. Yet it was only a ship! Just one ship and a lot of men! The ship was not even a handsome one, being merely a three-masted steam sealer, greasy and smeared in every part with coal soot from her tall smoke stack. She lay a mile or so away, but well within the pack, through the outer edge of which she had



HE REACHED A POINT FROM WHICH HE COULD LOOK BEYOND THE BARRIER.

forced a passage. The men, evidently her crew, who were on the ice near the foot of Cabot's ridge, were a disreputable looking lot, ragged, dirty, unkempt, and as bloody as so many butchers. And that is exactly what they were—butchers engaged in their legitimate business of killing the seals that, coming up from the south to meet the drifting ice pack, had crawled out on it by thousands to rear their young.

This was all that Cabot saw; yet the sight so affected him that he laughed and sobbed for joy. Then he stood up, and, with glad tears blinding his eyes, tried to shout to the men beneath him, but could only utter hoarse whispers; for, in his overpowering happiness, he had almost lost the power of speech. As he could not call to them he began to wave his arms to attract their attention, and then, all at once, he was nearly paralysed by a hail from close at hand of:

"Hello there, ye bloomin' idjit! Wot's hup?"

Whirling around, Cabot saw, standing only a few rods away, a man who had evidently just climbed the opposite side of the ridge. He recognised him in an instant, as he must have done had he met him in the most crowded street of a great city, so distinctively peculiar was his figure.

"David! David Gidge!" he gasped, recovering his voice for the effort, and in another moment, flinging his arms about the astonished

mariner's neck, he was pouring out a flood of incoherent words.

"Wal, I'll be jiggered!" remarked Mr. Gidge, as he disengaged himself from Cabot's impulsive embrace and stepped back for a more comprehensive view. "Your voice sounds familiar, Mister, but I can't say as I ever seen you before. I took ye fust off fer a b'ar, and then fer a Huskie. When I seen you was white, I 'lowed ye might be one of the 'Marmaid's' crew, seeing as she was heading fer the pack 'bout the time we struck it. Now, though, as I say, I'm jiggered ef I know exectly who ye be."

"Why, Mr. Gidge, I'm Cabot Grant, who——"

"Of course. To be sartin! Now I know ye!" interrupted the other. "But where's White? What hev ye done with Whiteway Baldwin?"

"He's back there on the ice helpless with a crippled leg, freezing and starving to death; but if you'll come at once I'll show you the way, and we may still be in time to save him."

With instant comprehension of the necessity for prompt action, Mr. Gidge, who, as Cabot afterwards learned, was first mate of the sealer "Labrador," turned and shouted in stentorian tones to the men who were working below:

"Knock off, all hands, and follow me. Form a line and keep hailing distance apart, so's we'll

find our way back after dark. There's white men starving on the ice. One of ye go to the ship and report. Move lively! Now, lad, I'm ready."

Two hours later Cabot and David Gidge, with a long line of men streaming out behind them, reached the little hut. There was no answer to the cheery shouts with which they approached it, and, as they crawled through its low entrance, they were filled with anxious misgivings. What if they were too late after all? No spark of fire lighted the gloom or took from the deadly chill of the interior, and no voice bade them welcome. But, as David Gidge struck a match, a low moaning sounded from one side, and told them that White was at least alive.

It took but a minute to remove him from the hut, together with the few things worth taking away that it contained. Then it was left without a shadow of regret, and the march to the distant ship was begun. Four men carried White, who seemed to have sunk into a stupor, while two more supported Cabot, who had become suddenly weak and so weary that he begged to be allowed to sleep where he was.

"It's been a close call for both of 'em," said David Gidge, "and now, men, we've got to make the quickest kind of time getting 'em back to the ship."

Fortunately there were plenty of willing hands to which the burdens might be shifted, for the "Labrador" carried a crew two hundred strong, and, as the little party moved swiftly from one shouting man to another, it constantly gained accessions.

At length the sealer was reached, and the rescued lads were taken to her cabin, where the ship's doctor, having made every possible preparation for their reception, awaited them. They were given hot drinks, rubbed, fed, and placed between warm blankets, where poor, weary Gabot was at last allowed to fall asleep without further interruption.

The animal sought by the sealers of Newfoundland amid the furious storms and crashing floes of the great ice pack is not the fur-bearing seal of Alaska, but a variety of the much less important hair seal, which may be seen almost anywhere along the Atlantic coast. From its skin seal leather is made, but it is chiefly valuable for the oil yielded by the layer of fat lying directly beneath the skin and enveloping the entire body. These seals would hardly be worth hunting unless they could be captured easily and in quantities; but, on their native ice in early spring, the young seals are found in prime condition and in vast numbers. Each helpless victim is killed by a blow on the head, "sculped" or stripped of his

pelt, and the flayed body is left lying in a pool of its own blood.

The crew of a single vessel will thus destroy thousands of seals in a day, and in some prosperous years the total kill of seals has passed the half million mark. Now only about a dozen steamers are engaged in the business, but by them from 200,000 to 300,000 seals are destroyed each spring. The movements of sealing vessels are governed by rigidly enforced laws that forbid them to leave port before the 12th of March, to kill a seal before the 14th of the same month, or after the 20th of April, and prohibit any steamer from making more than one trip during this short open season. The crews are paid in shares of the catch, and men are never difficult to obtain for the work, as the sealing season comes when there is nothing else to be done.

As March was not yet ended when our lads were received aboard the "Labrador," and as she would not return to port until the last minute of the open season had expired, they had before them nearly a month in which to recover their exhausted energies and learn the business of sealing. White had suffered so severely, and reached such a precarious condition, that he required every day of the allotted time for recuperation, and even at its end his strength was by

no means fully restored. Cabot, on the other hand, woke after a thirty-six-hour nap, ravenously hungry, and as fit as ever for anything that might offer. After that, although he could never bring himself to assist in clubbing baby seals to death, he took an active part in the other work of the ship, thereby fully repaying the cost of the food eaten by himself and White.

Of course, with their very first opportunity, both lads eagerly plied David Gidge with questions concerning the welfare of the Baldwin family and everything that had happened during their long absence. Thus they learned to their dismay that another suit had been brought against the Baldwin estate that threatened to swallow what little property had been left, and that White, having been convicted of contempt of court for continuing the lobster factory after an adverse decision had been rendered, was now liable to a fine of one thousand dollars, or imprisonment, as soon as he landed.

"But what has become of my mother and sister?" asked White.

"They are in Harbour Grace," answered David Gidge, "stopping with some kin of mine. You see, all three of us was brung to St. Johns as witnesses, and there wasn't money enough to take us back till I could come sealing and make some."

"You are a trump, David Gidge!" exclaimed

Cabot, while White gratefully squeezed the honest fellow's hand.

"I promised to look arter 'em till you come back," said the sailorman, simply.

At length the sealing season closed, and the prow of the "Labrador" was turned homeward, but even now, after many an anxious discussion, our lads were undecided as to what they should do upon landing. But a solution of the problem came to Cabot on the day that the steamer entered Conception Bay and anchored close off Bell Island, to await the moving of a great ice mass that had drifted into the harbour.

"I know what we'll do!" he cried.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ASSISTANT MANAGER OF THE MAN-WOLF MINE.

As the deeply laden sealer drew near to land, Cabot had impatiently scanned the coast of the great island that he had once thought so remote, but which, after his long sojourn in the Labrador wilderness, now seemed almost the same as New York itself. When the "Labrador" entered Conception Bay, at the head of which lies Harbour Grace, her home port, and was forced by ice to anchor, he inquired concerning a small island that lay close at hand.

"Bell Island," he repeated meditatively, on being told its name. "Isn't there an iron mine on it?"

"Sartain," replied David Gidge. "The whole island is mostly made of iron."

"Then it is a place that I particularly want to visit, and I know what we will do. Of course, White, we can't let you go to prison, but at the same time you haven't, immediately available, the money with which to pay that fine. I have, though, right in St. Johns. So, if you will en-

dorse that New York draft to me, I will carry it into the city, deposit it at the bank, draw out the cash, and take the first train for Harbour Grace, so as to be there with more than enough money to pay your fine when you arrive. After that I propose that we both go on to New York, where I am almost certain I can get you something to do that will pay even better than a lobster factory. If that plan strikes you as all right, and if Mr. Gidge will set me ashore here, I'll just take a look at Bell Island and then hurry on to St. Johns."

The plan appearing feasible to White, Cabot —taking with him only his bag of specimens, to which he intended to add others of the Bell Island ore—bade his friends a temporary farewell, and was set ashore. As the country was still covered with snow, he had slung his snowshoes on his back, and as he was still clad in the well-worn fur garments that had been so necessary in Labrador, his appearance was sufficiently striking to attract attention as soon as he landed. One of the very first persons who spoke to him proved to be the young superintendent of the mine he wished to visit, and, when this gentleman learned that Cabot had just returned from Labrador, he offered him every hospitality. Not only did he show him over the mine and give him all possible information concerning it, but he kept him over

night in his own bachelor quarters, and provided a boat to take him across to Portugal Cove on the mainland in the morning.

From that point, there being no conveyance, Cabot was forced to walk the nine miles into St. Johns, which city he did not reach until nearly noon. Even there, where fur-clad Arctic explorers are not uncommon, Cabot's costume attracted much attention. Disregarding this, he inquired his way to the Bank of Nova Scotia, where he presented the letter of credit that he had carefully treasured amid all the vicissitudes of the past ten months. The paying teller of the bank examined it closely, and then took a long look at the remarkable-appearing young man who had presented it. Finally he said curtly:

"Sign your name."

Cabot did so, and the other, after comparing the two signatures, retired to an inner room. From it he reappeared a few moments later and requested Cabot to follow him inside, where the manager wished to see him.

The manager also regarded our lad with great curiosity as he said:

"You have retained this letter a long time without presenting it."

"And I might have retained it longer if I had not been in need of money," rejoined Cabot, somewhat nettled by the man's manner.

"You are Cabot Grant of New York?"

"I am."

"Not yet of age?"

"Not quite."

"And you have a guardian?"

"I have."

"Do you mind telling his name and address?"

"Is that a necessary preliminary to drawing money on a letter of credit?"

"In this case it is."

"Well, then, he is James Hepburn, President of the Gotham Trust and Investment Company."

"Just so, and you will doubtless be interested in this communication from him."

So saying, the manager handed over the telegram in which Mr. Hepburn instructed the St. Johns branch of the Bank of Nova Scotia to advance only the price of a ticket to New York on a letter of credit that would be presented by his ward, Cabot Grant.

"What does it mean?" asked Cabot in bewilderment, as he finished reading this surprising order.

"I've no idea," replied the manager dryly. "I only know that we are bound to follow those instructions, and can let you have but forty dollars, which is the price of a first-class ticket to New York by steamer. Moreover, as this is sailing day, and the New York steamer leaves in

a couple of hours, I would advise you to engage passage and go on board at once, if you do not want to be indefinitely detained here."

"In what way?"

"Possibly by the sheriff, who has wanted you for some time in connection with a certain French Shore lobster case that the government is prosecuting."

Perplexed and indignant as he was, Cabot realised that only in New York could his tangled affairs be straightened out, and that the quicker he got there the better. Determined, however, to make one more effort in behalf of his friend, he produced the missionary's draft and asked if the manager would cash it.

"Certainly not," replied that individual promptly. "Under present circumstances, Mr. Grant, we must decline to have any business dealings with you other than to accept your receipt for forty dollars, which will be paid you in the outer office."

So Cabot swallowed his pride, took what he could get, and left the bank a little more downcast than he had been at any time since the day on which President Hepburn had entrusted him with his present mission.

"I don't understand it at all," he muttered to himself, as he sought an eating-house, where he proposed to expend a portion of his money in sat-

isfying his keen appetite. "Seems to me it is a mighty mean return for all I have gone through, and Mr. Hepburn will have to explain matters pretty clearly when I get back to New York."

From the eating-house Cabot sent a letter to White, explaining his inability to secure the money he had expected, begging him to lie low for a few days, and announcing his own immediate departure for New York, from which place he promised to send back the amount of the draft immediately upon his arrival. In this letter Cabot also enclosed fifteen dollars, just to help White out until he could send him some more money. This outlay left our young engineer but twenty-five dollars, but that would pay for a steerage passage, which, he reflected, would be plenty good enough for one in his reduced circumstances, and leave a few dollars for emergencies when he reached New York.

Two hours later, still clutching the bag of specimens that now formed his sole luggage, he stood on the forward deck of the steamer "Amazon" as she slipped through the narrow passage leading out from the land-locked harbour, gazing back at the city of St. Johns climbing its steep hillside and dominated by the square towers of its Roman Catholic cathedral. He was feeling very forlorn and lonely, and was wondering how he should manage to exist on steerage fare in

steerage company during the next five days, when a familiar voice, close at hand, said:

"Hello, young man in furs! Where do you come from? Been to the North Pole with Peary?"

Turning quickly, Cabot gasped out:

"Captain Phinney!"

"No, not cap'n, but second mate Phinney," retorted the other. "But how do you know my name? I don't recognise you."

"I am Cabot Grant, who was with you on the 'Lavinia' when——"

"Good heavens, man! It can't be."

"It is, though, and I never was more glad to see any one, not even David Gidge, than I am to see you at this minute. But why are you second mate instead of captain?"

"Because," replied the other bitterly, "it was the only berth they would give me after I lost my ship, and I had to take it or beg."

"But I thought you went down with the 'Lavinia'?"

"So I thought you did, but it seems both of us were mistaken. All but you got off in two of the boats, and ours was picked up the next day by a liner bound for New York. But how, in the name of all that is wonderful— Hold on, though. Let us go up to my room, where we can talk comfortably."

As a result of this happy meeting, Cabot's voyage was made very pleasant after all. Much as he had to tell and to hear, he also found time to write out a full report on the Bell Island mine, and also a series of notes concerning the ore specimens that he was carrying to New York.

At length the great city was reached, the "Amazon" was made fast to her Brooklyn pier, and Cabot went to bid the second mate good-bye. "Hold on a bit," said the latter, "and run up to the house with me. You can't go without seeing Nelly and the baby."

"Nice calling rig I've got on, haven't I?" laughed Cabot. "Why, it would scare 'em stiff. So not to-day, thank you; but I'll come to-morrow."

The carriage that Cabot engaged to carry him across to the city cost him his last cent of money, but he knew it was well worth it when, still in furs and with his snowshoes still strapped to his back, he entered the Gotham building. Such a sensation did he create that he would have been mobbed in another minute had he not dodged into an elevator and said:

"President's room, please."

He so petrified Mr. Hepburn's clerks and office boys by his remarkable appearance that they neglected to check his progress, and allowed him to walk unchallenged into the sacred private of-

fice. Its sole occupant was writing, and did not notice the entrance until Cabot, laying a folded paper on his desk, said:

"Here is that Bell Island report, Mr. Hepburn."

The startled man sprang to his feet with a face as pale as though he had seen a ghost, and for a few moments stared in speechless amazement at the fur-clad intruder. Then the light of recognition flashed into his eyes, and holding out a cordial hand he said:

"My dear boy, how you frightened me! Where on earth did you come from?"

"From the steerage of the steamer 'Amazon,'" replied Cabot, stiffly, ignoring his guardian's proffered hand. "I only dropped in to hand you that Bell Island report, and to say that, as this happens to be my twenty-first birthday, I shall be pleased to receive whatever of my property you may still hold in trust at your earliest convenience. With that business transacted, it is perhaps needless to add, that I shall trouble no further the man who was cruel enough to leave me penniless among strangers."

"Cabot, are you crazy, or what do you mean? I received your Bell Island report months ago, and it was that caused me to recall you. Why did you not come at once?"

"I never sent a Bell Island report. In fact

"MY DEAR BOY, YOU HAVE DONE SPLENDIDLY."

I never wrote one until yesterday, and there it lies. Nor did I ever receive any notice of recall, and I did not come back sooner because I have been following your instructions and wintering in Labrador. There I have acquired one of the most remarkable iron properties in the world, which I intend to develop as far as possible with my own resources, seeing that not one cent of your money has been used in defraying the expenses of my recent trip," replied Cabot, hotly.

But Mr. Hepburn did not hear the last of this speech, for he had opened the report laid on his desk and was glancing rapidly through it.

"This is exactly what I expected and wanted!" he exclaimed. "Why didn't you send it in before, instead of that other one?"

"I never sent any other," repeated Cabot, and then they sat down to mutual explanations.

For that whole morning President Hepburn denied himself to all callers and devoted his entire attention to Cabot's recital. When it was finished, and when the bag full of specimens had been examined, the elder man grasped the other's hand and said:

"My dear boy, you have done splendidly! I am not only satisfied with you as an agent, but am proud of you as a ward. Yes, this is your day of freedom from our guardianship, and I shall take pleasure in turning over to you the

balance of the property left by your father. It, together with the balance remaining on your letter of credit, and your salary for the past year, will amount to about ten thousand dollars, a portion of which at least I would advise you to invest in the Man-wolf mine."

"Then you intend to develop it, sir?" cried Cabot.

"Certainly, provided we can acquire your claim to the property, and engage a certain Mr. Cabot Grant to act as our assistant Labrador manager."

"Do you think me capable of filling so responsible a position, sir?"

"I am convinced of it," replied Mr. Hepburn, smiling.

"And may I find places for White, and David Gidge, and Captain Phinney, and——"

"One of the duties of your new position will be the selection of your subordinates," interrupted the other, "and I should hope you would give preference to those whose fidelity you have already tested."

Within an hour after this happy conclusion of the interview, Cabot had wired White Baldwin the full amount of the missionary's draft and invited him to come as quickly as possible to New York. He had also written to Captain Phinney asking him to resign at once his position as second

mate, in order that he might assume command of a steamer shortly to be put on a run between New York and Labrador.

With these pleasant duties performed, our young engineer prepared to accept President Hepburn's invitation to a dinner that was to be given in his honour, and with which the happiest day of his life was to be concluded.

THE END.

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